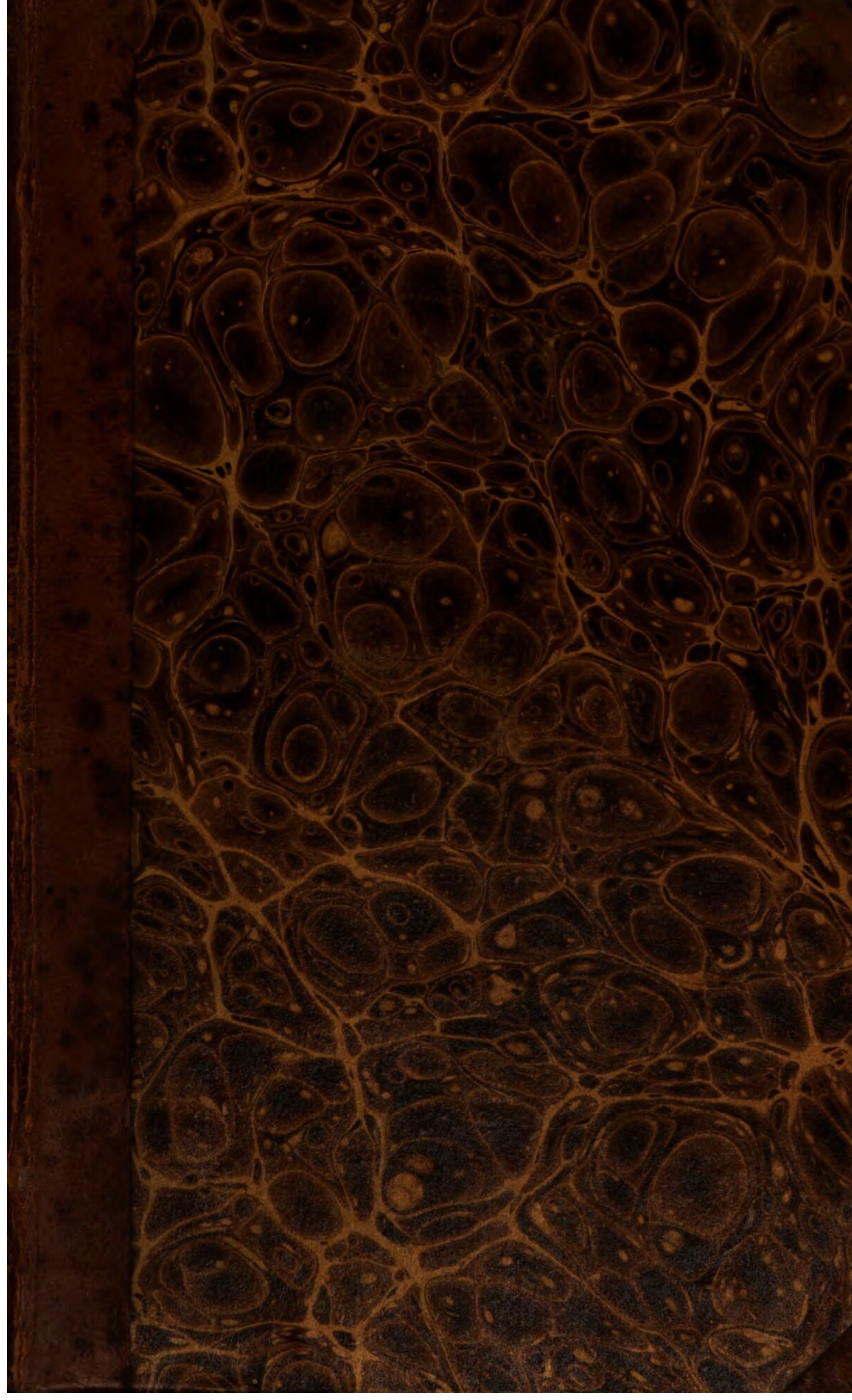
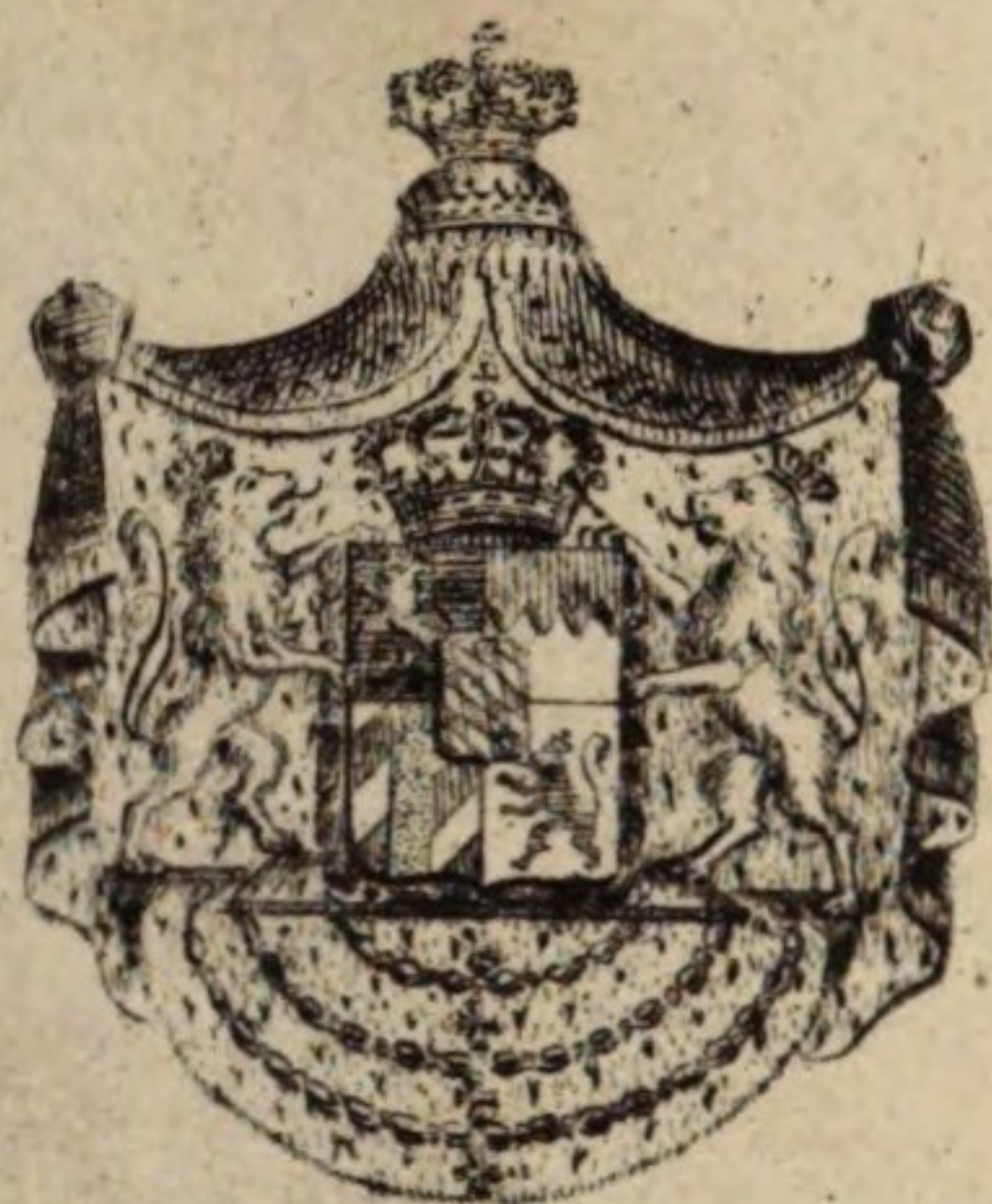




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P R O S E,

BY

A POET.

Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams.
IL PENSEROSO.

That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
LYCIDAS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

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P R O S E

A POET

W. D. HOWARD

VOL. II

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PROSE, BY A POET.

WAR AND PEACE.

ABOUT three weeks before the battle of Waterloo, while the writer of these pages was one day turning over some old papers, he was startled by a strange and portentous expression of his own, which he had long forgotten, and the very meaning of which did not immediately strike his comprehension; — “*Peace is only the sleep of war.*” The phrase had been used on occasion of the failure of Lord Malmesbury’s negociation at Lisle in 1797. The recollections of eighteen years of subsequent hostility throughout Europe, in which *peace*, when we fancied we had it under the Addington administration, was literally only *war asleep*, rushed upon his mind, and awakened sensations so awful and

transporting, that the images of thought became embodied, and passed in vision before him.

Rapt into by-gone times, he saw a goose's egg lying in the middle of a highway, on which multitudes were travelling; indeed it was the highway *to* and *through* all nations. A careless foot happening to break this egg; instead of a gosling, out crawled a reptile, which at first sight seemed a *centipedes*, but increasing in bulk every moment, it presently grew up into a monster as hideous to look upon as a Hindoo divinity. It was the Demon of War in his own person, never before revealed to mortal eye. His figure might have been fashioned in mockery of the human form; his stature reached the clouds, and his shadow darkened the fairest provinces of the globe. He had two heads, which, unlike those of Janus, were placed front to front; innumerable arms, branching out all round his shoulders, sides, and chest; with legs as multitudinous, resembling in colour and motion the pillars of sand in an African whirlwind. His twin faces were frightfully dis-

torted ; they glared, they grinned, they spat, they railed, and hissed, and roared ; they gnashed their teeth, and bit, and butted with their foreheads at each other. His arms, wielding swords, and spears, and shields, were fighting pell-mell together, each against its neighbours, right and left, so that every one had to contend with two. Often were they broken, paralyzed, or cut sheer off, yet they were quickly restored to strength and activity, or reinstated by others that sprouted from the stumps. His legs, in like manner, were indefatigably at variance, striding contrary ways, trampling on each other's toes, or kicking shins, by universal consent, in the most ludicrous and horrible manner. Beneath them the nations of Christendom were like mole-hills overturned, where the inhabitants, like ants when their nests are broken up, were running to and fro in consternation, and perishing by thousands at every change of his station.

Among the victims, however, there were some, splendidly apparelled, whose business it was to preserve the rest from being crushed

by his steps, yet who appeared to delight in the misfortunes of their fellow-creatures, whom they urged to push one another down in the path of the monster, for their own amusement. At the same time, with goads in their hands, which had been entrusted to them expressly for the purpose of keeping him off, they incessantly pricked him on, even when he would have been quiet, or have taken a different road. One of these especially distinguished himself; he was a little man, in a green coat, with an eagle's head on his shoulders, and a cock's comb upon it, of which he was prodigiously vain. This nondescript being had the power of driving the destroyer whithersoever he pleased, — except across the straits of Dover.

After the giant had thus exercised himself (with one short interval of slumber) for more than twenty years, — twenty years in a reverie may be passed in twenty seconds, — he appeared utterly exhausted. Suddenly, as if he had been struck with apoplexy, he lay down, and stretching himself out at full length, from the rock of Gibraltar, across the

whole continent of Europe, and beyond the arctic circle, he made his pillow of the polar ices, and fell fast asleep, — for “Peace is only the sleep of war.”

The deponent in this case followed him into his slumber; for, lo! the monster dreamed; and the first thing that he dreamed was, naturally enough, that he was awake. He imagined himself standing upright upon his forest of legs, with all his arms spread out in the sky, amidst the breezes, the dew, and the sunshine of a lovely spring morning. The songs of the birds, the fragrance of the flowers, the glory of the heavens, and the beauty of the earth ravished his senses, and renovated his very existence; he found himself, notwithstanding his former consciousness, a different being, with new feelings, affections, and desires. His opposite faces, reciprocally gazing and admiring, by degrees grew so amiable in each other's eyes, that they smiled, and blushed, and kissed, and said the softest, sweetest things that his four ears had ever heard. His manifold arms

embraced, shook hands together, and exchanged rings in token of eternal reconciliation. His legs all stood up in one phalanx; all ran in one direction, and at last all fell to dancing, till he was forced to sit down upon the Alps with fatigue of enjoyment. Meanwhile this chimera of chimeras, who before had frozen the beholder of his person and performances with fresh horror at every look, grew so gentle, intellectual, and graceful, in manners, in aspect, and in form, that the present witness (though slow to believe any good of him) became as fully persuaded as he himself was, that he could be no longer the same, but that he must actually have undergone a metamorphosis as marvellous as any thing in Ovid, from the Demon of War being transformed into the Angel of Peace: and so in truth he was, for he was asleep, and "Peace is only the sleep of war."

As soon as he could divert his attention from his own altered character and novel situation, he began to look round him, and was enchanted to find, that the world had

been as happily regenerated in the transition from war to peace as he was. Instead of mourning and poverty, rapine, devastation, and carnage, violence in every shape, and misery in every degree, that could be inflicted or endured, there was one face of gladness, one heart of affection, among millions and millions of beings, of divers climes, and languages, and governments, who had been heretofore fellow-sufferers without sympathy, and mortal enemies without knowledge of each other. The plough was following in the track where armies had marched; the battle-fields were already green with the creeping herbage of spring; nature herself was scattering flowers on the graves of those whom man had first murdered, and then abandoned; cities burnt or demolished were rebuilding with more than original splendour; people were travelling in every direction into foreign countries, not to plunder and depopulate, but for purposes of pleasure, or in pursuit of knowledge; ships were sailing on the ocean, not to burn, sink, and destroy,

but to convey the peculiar riches of every land to all the rest. In a word, order and harmony, love and sincerity, appeared to prevail universally.

On a nearer inspection, indeed, the giant in his dream saw that there were yet many roots of bitterness left in the soil of Europe, and many tares sown by an enemy among the good seed of concord, which might spring up and ripen into future mischiefs. There were certain things, also, (easily discovered,) which stirred his former spirit within him, but he resolutely kept it down; for while he beheld the little man, in the green coat, with the eagle's head, but without the cock's comb, busily employed in building, farming, and legislating on an island of the Mediterranean, no larger than the palm of one of his own pacific hands, he felt a tranquillity of soul which all the wrongs of Norway, Saxony, Poland, or Italy could not destroy, though they *did* occasionally disturb it; and he sometimes wondered how his blood came to be so cool, that he could endure the sight of such

enormities, and not move earth and ocean to redress them. As for the perpetuation of the slave-trade by a solemn treaty of Christian potentates, the revival of the Holy Inquisition, and its concomitant plagues in Spain, the reluctant and hollow submission of a profligate soldiery to a family of princes whom they hated and despised in France, — whenever these exasperated his feelings beyond that moderate pitch of indignation which evaporates in invective, but never breaks out into blows, he instantly turned for consolation towards the august congress of sovereigns and statesmen at Vienna, who were calmly, solemnly, and deliberately setting the boundaries of nations never to be passed, and dividing the “souls” of men among themselves with more than paternal solicitude, and the nicest mathematical precision. In *their* wisdom, magnanimity, and disinterestedness, he welcomed, with all the ardour of inexperience, the pledges of universal and everlasting amity among all the families of the civilised world.

Ten months had already elapsed in this charming illusion, — for time in a dream is as evanescent as it hath already been shewn to be in a brown study, — when, all in an instant, our ruminator felt a shock on his left side, as if the man in the moon, from that astounding elevation, had leapt upon him, broken through his ribs, and crushed out his heart; while a voice, more terrible than he had ever heard during the French Revolution, from the tribune, the guillotine, or the throne, thundered in his ears, “*Le congrès est dessous.*”

He started up, and the first object he saw, (for instinctively he looked that way,) was the little man, in the green coat, with the eagle’s head, who had just jumped on shore, in the south of France. The giant fixed his eye intensely upon *him*, and never winked, nor withdrew it, day nor night, for two whole weeks, while he watched his old tormentor, carried in the arms of Fortune herself, seated again without resistance on the throne of France, and the cock’s comb replaced by her on the eagle’s crest. Every moment of this

ghastly interval, the phantom himself was visibly relapsing into his former ferocity ; and no sooner was the audacious adventurer re-established, than his two heads began to frown, and snarl and snap ; his hands to combat, and his feet to wrestle. The demon of war was alive, awake, and in action again ; for “ peace is only the sleep of war.” — When will he sleep, and what will be his dream, next time ?

P. S. After an interval of eight years, (Midsummer, 1823,) every reader may answer this question in the way that will best satisfy himself.

THE EGOTIST,

No. II.

EXTRACTS FROM MY JOURNAL AT SCARBOROUGH
IN SEPTEMBER, 1821.

The Epistle Dedicatory: from Me to You.

***** October 21. 1820.

My dear Friend,

IN a letter addressed by You to Me, at Scarborough, dated September 29. you say, "I should like vastly to peep at you." Here you may do so, and at the distance of ninety miles, and a month after every thing happened, you may not only see my motions, but hear me think. It is true that this journal was written, in the first instance, for my own amusement, (though I grew tired of it at the end of nine days, the novelty having ceased,) yet as a man with a pen in his hand seldom writes on a fancy-subject to please himself

alone, I acknowledge that one purpose of putting down these *memorabilia* was the hope of diverting you also, when you might have a few good natured moments to throw away on lucubrations so exquisitely trifling as mine; assured that where they are most foolish and faulty, You will forgive them as coming from
ME.

MY JOURNAL.

My journal! — Yes, there it stands, — a fair specimen of my handwriting. But who am I? — Nay, that is more than I can say. I have lived ***** and ***** years in this world, and do not know myself yet, though I have been learning, — slowly enough, and at a mortal expense, — all the while. So much, however, I do know, that I would not tell the twentieth part of it to any human being for all the secrets that his own bosom contains, were he to reveal them to me in return. — But all this is rambling, — and for that very reason, an exceedingly proper commencement of my journal, which will be little else, and nothing better, if it *be* mine.

September 12.

This morning, after a night of such delirious dreamings as find their way into a man's head, when he expects to set out on a journey, and fears that he may not be called in time, — towards daylight I became so much more awake than asleep as to distinguish, that certain sounds which I had first heard, when I was more asleep than awake, were the chimes of the parish church of D. announcing the hour of five. After giddily listening to them till my brain grew tolerably steady, I lay still a few minutes longer to muster courage for the strange adventure of rising at so untimely an hour for the sluggard. There was no alternative but to make the effort or be left behind. I roused myself thoroughly, and did not repent the exertion, for just as the town-hall clock struck six, “smack went the whip; round went the wheels,” and away we rattled in the Union coach for R. There was a special pleasure in finding myself snug within the little moving room, between its two chattering windows,

because some of my fellow-travellers were not so fortunate as to keep the places which they had got on the outside. Two youths, one of whom had the care of the guns, and the other of the dogs with which they were setting out on a shooting expedition into Lincolnshire, were separated by an awkward accident. The guns did not go off, but the dogs did; and suddenly bolting out of the basket behind, they ran homeward up the last street as we left the town. The coach was stopt several minutes while the lad who was their keeper, followed the chace, whistling, and calling, and panting after them in vain. Whether he caught the game or not, is beyond my shrewdness to conjecture, for we saw no more of him; his companion with the artillery proceeded with us, and he — may live to come another day.

The morning was misty, picturesquely so, but I was not poetical enough to enjoy its varying and evanescent beauties, till we reached the old stone-built, red-tiled village of H., partly situated on the slope of an op-

posite hill, and partly scattered along the high-road. There the vapour had left the valley, through which the river meandered in light; the broad slanting base of the castle-mount was glowing with field and forest verdure. A little higher, the blue haze engirdled the wood to its very crown, out of which uprose the grey Saxon tower, like the apparition of what it had been seven hundred years ago,—so delicately tinted and elevated in air, that it appeared not to rest upon the earth, but the eye gazed upon it as something never so seen before, and which could not be seen so *long*. It was the vision of a few seconds; suddenly changing from silvery whiteness to flat shade, without any relief on the surface, as a turn of the road snatched us from the sunny to the sombre side,—and presently it was no more. That wreck of a chivalrous age has stood, even as a ruin, for many generations, but such is the infinite vicissitude of glory and loveliness in landscape, that there is no hazard in saying, it never before presented, under any combination

of light and shadow, precisely the same aspect as that which we beheld.

The atmosphere thickened as we approached R., and a humid fog overspread the country, so that when we got out of the coach, — I say *we*, though I forgot to record that I had a companion, an elderly gentleman, with me in the inside ; and before the end of this stage I had learned that we were to be partners to Scarborough : his name I never found out ; but as he happened to know mine, that was sufficient for all the purposes of occasional conversation by the way : he was just such company as I like in such a case ; he neither bored me with his eternal talk, nor expected me to entertain him with mine, straining to be heard against the grinding of wheels, the ringing of harness, and the clattering of hoofs : — but I must run back some dozen lines to bring up the sense, which is often left behind when I am running away with words. — I beg their pardon, I mean when words are running away with me, as they are at this moment, even while I

am complaining of their legerdemain; — I must therefore break through, at a right angle, from this labyrinth of digression: — the fog was so dense when we landed at R. that, without a quibble, it bade fair to be a foul day.

Just as I stept upon the pavement before the sign of the Ram, a gentleman, with locks which Time had blanched, and a countenance which he had furrowed without spoiling; — nay, some faces and ringlets are mightily improved by the touches and colouring of that hand which finally obliterates every thing; — this gentleman, so mellowed by years, looked earnestly in my face, and grasping my arm with the cordial violence of good nature, insisted, in spite of my stammering excuses, that I should go and breakfast with him and his lady, — being old acquaintance, — till the coach, which was not expected for an hour, came in from the north. I went, and was kindly welcomed by Mrs. * * * * *, whom I am afraid I hurried beyond her convenience, to suit my haste. That, however, was her

good man's business, and no doubt for his sake, if not for mine, she was glad for once to be put out of her way. I had long known him as an ingenious painter, but was surprised to find that he had latterly turned his hand to modelling. He showed me several creditable specimens of his proficiency, particularly busts of Dr. C. and Mr. Southey. At parting, he asked a favour of me, (as he termed it,) which I felt little ambition to grant, though the request implied a compliment far above my merits. It was, — that he might be allowed to make a model from my head. What sort of a head must his own be, for such a thought to come into it? He would not be said *nay*, and when I pleaded that mine was not a skull for an exhibition, he was pleased to say, "It is enough for me that it is Mr. * * * * *'s. This of course put me to silence. However, as it was not convenient to leave the original in his hands, expecting that I might possibly have occasion for such a thing as a head before my journey's end, I carried it away on my shoul-

ders, promising him the reversion of it when I could better spare it. — N. B. Whatever I may permit Mr. * * * * * to do with the outside of my head, he shall make no model of the inside, I'll promise him ; — one peep into that little Bedlam would satisfy any of my friends, that their ignorance of me is sometimes very much to their advantage, as well as to mine ; — in what manner, it becomes not me to say. — But my journal will be as long as the Universal History at this rate ; I must be brief henceforward ; indeed, on recollection of the *memorabilia* of this day, I find that the most interesting events occurred in the morning ; so I may finish the notices of it in the log-book style, with the simple record of matters of fact.

We entered the coach ; — *we* were five now, my comrade and myself being joined, in the inside, by a young gentleman and two ladies, one of whom I believe was his wife, the other her sister ; most probably a wedding-party, but this did not occur to me till the day after, when I had the good fortune

to fall in with another pair newly manacled with fetters, a thousand times pleasanter to wear than to walk at liberty by one's self. The gentleman from the few words which he spoke (in my hearing), in the course of two or three and twenty statute miles, may be English-born, but the ladies, who did not talk much more, must be Scotch by their accent, their physiognomy, and a certain sprightly simplicity, much too homely, and at the same time graceful, to be called by a French name, (*naïveté*,) and there is no word for it in the language of either side of the Tweed; but the thing itself is one of the beautiful and inimitable characteristics of our modest and not too highly cultivated north-country women. I, as usual, lay by, and did not attempt to make myself particularly amiable to them, though I was placed opposite her, whom I now imagine to have been the *bride-maid*, and who was fair, and young, and no doubt wise enough to drop the latter half of that elegant compound term, and make any reasonable man happy by becoming the first

to him. Indeed I lost an opportunity, which probably will never recur, of saying something very trite and very fine to the fair travellers; for having occasion to wait half an hour at the next small town, I strolled into the church-yard, — as one generally does in a strange place, — to make acquaintance with the dead, where one knows not a soul living, except by the sign-boards over shops and ale-houses, which are not half so interesting to look upon as grave-stones with their epitaphs; — when, lo! just as I had completed the circumambulation of the church, the two ladies, without their 'squire, had entered the yard, and were stepping from tomb to tomb in quest of such records as might be expected there, with the certainty of not being disappointed. Something came into my mind to address to them on — on — on — why every one knows what; but as it was not uttered, I cannot take upon me to say, whether it concerned this world or the next, though I have a confused notion that it referred to both. It is lost for ever, like many a good thought

of mine, for want of courage to speak it; — and, by one of those unmannerly evasions, at which I have acquired a little dexterity, from being necessitated to practise them, when a certain constitutional shyness, inveterate and invincible, seizes me, and paralyzes my spirit itself, I neither presumed to accost nor even to notice them. And yet I should not wonder if they put me down for a proud piece of living affectation. How many opportunities of making myself agreeable or ridiculous, have I thus thrown away in the course of my life, by being blind, and deaf, and dumb, when, if I had had ten senses, I could have found exercise for them all to support the character which I have wished to hold in the eyes of others, — whether friends or strangers, — for one would not choose to be hated or despised by any body.

At two o'clock we arrived at Booth-Ferry. Here we dined, — but I can make nothing of the dinner in my journal, because it was a good one; had it been otherwise, I might have occupied a page with invective, — for there

is no subject on which travellers are wont to be more eloquent than bad dinners. We afterwards crossed the river in the usual way. The boat contained, besides the two rowers, the following passengers and their baggage, — myself and my first companion, the aforementioned young gentleman, the two young ladies, and three outsides of our sex; but by far the most important personage on board, — in my eyes at least, — was a stout coach-horse, which a groom held at the head, while our driver stood at his side, ready to lay hands on him, if he should attempt to plunge either on board or over-board. The poor animal behaved as well as could be expected, though I kept watching his heels very suspiciously, wishing most fervently, that if he made any improper use of them, it might be in my power to make a good use of mine; — the prospect of the first, however, was much more probable than the latter, when, about the middle of the passage, he began to move uneasily, and turning his long intelligent face towards the group of passengers, I could see

his large eyes, shaded with the harness-blinds, sparkle and roll with jealous animation. "So, so," said the groom, while coachee patted his sleek shoulder; on which he several times stretched out his neck, and bowed his head, with dilated nostrils, to sip of the water, as it rapidly glid by. There was something so much like danger in this brief voyage, that I was glad to leap on shore, and feel the security of dry land. Cowards have quick ears, and I had overheard the groom say to Dobbin, just as he embarked, "This 'll be a bit on a treat to thee; thou's not been across here this mony a day, lad!"

On the eastern bank of the river two coaches in waiting divided our party; one going to Hull received the trio several times mentioned; the other took up my companion and myself with two outsides for Scarborough. The journey to the latter place was as barren of incident as the country is of variety, over the wolds, which from Howden to Driffeld present scarcely any thing but a monotonous map of fields, in rude geometrical shapes,

such as commissioners under inclosure-acts parcel out among freeholders of every size, from the lord of the manor and the rector, down to the forty-shilling yeoman, who claims a vote for the county. The phenomenon of a tree is rare indeed; the few stunted shrubs that are called such, being fantastically twisted by the winds, that sweep with uninterrupted freedom over an immense flat country, which looks like the bottom of the sea, and which the picturesque traveller would wish there, to have a few ranges of mountains, alternately barren, high-cultured or woody, in its place. This tract may have been beautiful when it was wild, but the plough, and the scythe, and quickset hedges, have so tamed its features, that one grows stupid to pore upon it mile after mile, where one mile is so much like another that they seem to be circulating decimals, -- and as endless, too, for you mark no progress.

At Market Weighton, in the heart of this Boeotian district, there happened to be an auction in the inn-yard where we changed

horses. The man of the hammer was selling blankets, and I was perhaps more amused with his wit, level as it was with the soil, than if it had been of a higher mood, such as I have often heard in our mountainous regions. — “Blankets, good blankets; going, a-going for seven and sixpence; seven and ninepence, — twelve-pence, thank ye, Ma’am, — seven and twelve-pence, that’s eight-shillings, — gone!” Again he started, — “Seven and three-pence, seven and sixpence!” — “A penny more,” cried a female voice. — “Thank ye, Ma’am, three-pence more, and I’ll give you the two-pence rather than you should miss your bargain, — they’re yours, Ma’am, for eight shillings.” — We left him knocking at it, and for aught I know, he may be there bawling yet; — his lungs seemed unweariable and his wit inexhaustible; but as we lost the sound of his voice before we had reached the tenth mile-stone beyond Market Weighton, the question whether he has finished his day’s work must be settled by future travellers in these lately discovered

regions : — lately discovered they must be ; for though the foundation may be as ancient as that of the world, the surface has been so recently formed, that were the fathers of the present generation to get up from their graves, and search from end to end their native country, they would not know their own sheep-walks again. A new country this must be, and its inhabitants novices, for another reason, which shows that it can be no part of *old* England, — there is but one turnpike on a line of road, and good limestone road too, nearly forty miles long ! What would Derbyshire carriers and travellers say to such highways in the Peak ?

We arrived in Driffield as the sun went down, and with him sunk my spirits from apathy to gloom. I forgot to say that the fog had cleared away towards twelve o'clock ; the evening was lovely, and the night serene. We had three-and-twenty miles yet to travel, and to my great mortification the circumstance that rendered this part of the way more dreary (and to a disturbed imagination

more dangerous) than the low country which we had been so long traversing, was, that there were hills, and dales, and rocks, and trees upon it; besides many scattered cottages, which, as the shadows deepened, ever and anon started upon us like ghosts out of the hedges, by the flaring light of our train-oil lamps, as we darted momentarily by them. My nerves grew more irritable, and my blood more feverish every hour. Most kinds of corporal sufferings become more tolerable by familiarity; the seat of a stage-coach, however, is an exception; it is a pleasant cushion when you set out in the morning, but if you keep your station till night, the poor Hindoo devotee, who does penance in a chair all porcupined with nails, points upwards, might perhaps envy your rest, though your ribs were indented with elbows, and your knees dove-tailed with those of your neighbour, till all feeling was lost,—but nobody else would.

The night-fall of a long day's journey, under such circumstances, brings a melancholy into my very heart, from which it is

circulated, like a thick and baneful fluid, through every artery and vein, till the whole frame of soul and body, reciprocally affecting each other, is sensible to wretchedness alone, — and wretchedness so strange, that men of sound mind and healthful fibre can form no conception of it. If I had committed a crime for which I was fleeing my country, or for which justice was hurrying me to a dungeon, I could not wonder at finding myself excruciated with fears, horrors, and anxieties for the past, the present, and the future; but to be the martyr of anguish only not intolerable because it is not remorse, is a fatality which I would gladly hope nobody ever experienced besides myself. I will not attempt to describe my misgivings as we approached the end of our journey, for then it was to be determined, in a few moments, whether I was to lie in the street, or on a truckle-bed in a miserable garret, or amidst magnificent hangings in a spacious chamber, or — No; — over these secrets of my four-wheeled prison-house, I draw the veil, for though terrible to endure, they would be superlatively ridicu-

lous on paper, and happily they were all tortures of supererogation. About half past ten o'clock the coach stopt, for the last time, at the George Inn, in Scarborough. We were courteously welcomed by the landlady, when a slight refreshment and tolerable night-quarters put an end to the pleasures and plagues of the day.

September 13.

This morning I rose early, — early for *me*, — glad to escape into the fresh air from the burnings, and tossings, and sighings, of the first night in a strange bed, in a strange place, after a harassing journey. I went down directly to the beach, where I rambled for an hour. Passing among the bathing machines, which were in busy motion to and fro between the tide and the cliff, I coasted my way about half a mile beyond the Spa-House, where no temptation of salt, sulphur, or chalybeate water, could allure me to taste of the cups, sparkling as they seemed with enchantment, which the Circes, Syrens, or

Nereids (whatever they were), in the shape of old women, as wrinkled as sea-weeds, and almost as brown, present to the *sparwers*, as we strangers are called here, during the season. The cool breeze and lively undulation of the sea, with its pleasant murmur, hoarse, and low, and everlasting, gradually lulled the fervour of my pulse, and gave tone to the nerves, and elasticity to the spirits. My mind was full of thought, — thought that retires within itself in the presence of magnificent objects, and scarcely assimilates with language while it is in process; in this respect differing from those trains of superficial ideas and swallow-winged fancies, which employ the greater part of my waking time, and so habitually embody themselves into words, that I feel as though I were soliloquising in silence all day long.

Returning towards the inn to breakfast, I called at Mrs. P.'s, where I had lodgings six years ago, and where I hoped, — or rather where I wished, — to get accommodation now, since on that point, at this crisis, (so morbid was my imagination,) all my prospect of com-

fort while I remained at Scarborough appeared to depend, as if I were a snail that could live under only one roof. I knocked; — a servant-maid came headlong and breathless down stairs to the door, which stood open. I asked, “Are Mrs. P.’s rooms at liberty?” — “Yes, Sir; — no, Sir; — but I’ll call Mrs. P.” was the answer, and the right one too; for the rooms which I wanted were not at liberty, and those which I did not want were. The disappointment was not a heart-breaking one; it was only a question of economy, and easily decided in favour of comfort; so I made the best bargain I could, and got the two best rooms in the house for it. An hour afterwards I took possession, and as soon as I felt myself within walls where I might do what I would, — be as dull or as idle, as merry or as industrious, as I pleased, — I became almost as extravagantly exhilarated as I had been hypochondriacally depressed the evening before. It was a glorious forenoon; and having three large southern windows, my sitting-room was so brilliantly illuminated,

that I might have imagined it a parlour in the palace of the sun.

One of the first thoughts that came into my mind, — and whoever shall happen to see these pages will no doubt say, that it was a bright one, and might have been a sunbeam in the shape of a thought, — was — to write a journal of my time, to see how pleasant the records of eating, drinking, walking, sleeping, and holding my tongue, (for I mean to do the latter with all my might here,) would look upon paper, after all that had given zest and interest to these every-day occurrences was past. I sat down immediately, began while the conceit was warm, and wrought so expeditiously, that, before I went to bed I had penned all but the last two pages of the foregoing narrative of my adventures in the stage-coach hither.

In the course of the forenoon, when I was as tired of writing as any body could be of reading what I had written, I walked up to the Lancasterian school which stands by the road-side, leading to the Castle Hill. I

knocked three times before I could gain admission. It is a misery of human life to stand on the outside of a door, after you have alarmed a street with a rap of ten syllables, and nobody comes till you have repeated your summons again and again, though all the neighbours are peeping from their windows, and there seem to be abundance of ears in every house within sound of the knocker, except that at which it hangs, and where you wish, if there be any, that they were nailed *to* the door for being “as deaf as door-nails.” This was not exactly my case; for I was neither seen nor heard within or without, for some time. At length, when I was about to lift the latch myself, a sharp monitor-looking lad opened the door.

● * * * *

After looking round the school, and exposing myself to the quick, keen glances of hundreds of young eyes, which are destined in future life, I hope, to gaze on far more interesting objects than I am, I returned to my lodgings just in time for the two most im-

portant purposes of existence at watering-places, — to dress for dinner, and to dine.

* * * * *

I cannot furnish a ground-plot and elevation of the table and dishes, but the dinner, as it always is at H.'s (next door to Mrs. P.'s), was plentiful and excellent. The company, begging their pardon, were much the same.

* * * * *

Neither wit nor wine flowed freely after dinner. I left the table within two hours of sitting down to it; walked two hours more; returned to my lodgings, drank tea alone, and declined going in to H.'s to supper. At eleven o'clock I went to bed, but not to sleep for many an hour, — how many? — Two or three, perhaps, — but two or three may seem many, they are so long, when a man can neither sleep, nor think, nor lie still, nor get up, nor do any thing except nothing. One might imagine that Time himself sometimes indulged in a nap, cunningly taking advantage to lie by, while the trusty watchmen out of doors, who are paid to mark his motions,

are soundly slumbering at their posts, and those who wake on beds of care or sickness are vainly urging him to speed his flight.*

September 14.

I forgot to make a memorandum yesterday, that I subscribed at A.'s circulating library. Being hitherto acquainted with the "Scotch novels" of the "Great Unknown," only from newspapers and reviews, I determined to take a course of them, during this visit to Scarborough. Accordingly I brought away Guy Mannering, and set about reading him with due ardour:—he is rather a mysterious gentleman; no conjuror I am sure, as skil-

* Since these papers are given to the public by something like a breach of confidence, it may be right to assure general readers that they miss nothing by the large omissions marked thus * * * * *; these expressive symbols being fair and sufficiently intelligible epitomes of long passages in the original manuscript. It is one of the rare merits of such journals as the present, that like the Sibylline books, they lose none of their value how much soever they may be reduced in bulk. The small critics shall not be defrauded by anticipation of the inevitable joke, on which they must stumble here. — *Editor.*

fully as he casts the nativity of Harry Bertram. The writer knows his own power to do what he will with his readers, and he exercises it very capriciously, but I care little what liberties he takes with me, if he will continue to stir up my mind, and transport my imagination as he has so far done. He is like an eagle, building his nest in my ignoble head, and hatching his royal brood of ideas there: I am already about the middle of the second volume, — half-way through the work, — but I presume the better half remains, for the interest heightens as the plot thickens; and yet it is a very clumsy plot; which proves that the author is not a lady. “They manage these things better” in Leadenhall-Street; witness the works, not in satin-stitch, but in true blue-stockings ware, of Mrs. * * * and Miss * *, three stars and two stars; — works worthy of as many admiration stops at the end, as the fair authors themselves throw away in the tissue of them!

I rambled, read, wrote, ate, drank, and now and then thought, — just a turn or two

of the brain, — all day long. In the evening I wished to go to * * * * *, but being too late, I climbed into the church-yard, which overlooks the town and the coast down to Flamborough-head. The night was gathering round the bay, through which the tide was toiling to and fro, and sounding, as it hath sounded since creation, on the beach; — “the voice of many waters” bringing tidings, if their language could be interpreted, from all quarters of the globe, of whatever man is doing or suffering on every shore which the ocean visits. There was a glimpse of moonlight through the undulated clouds over Oliver’s Mount, itself shapen like a huge dark wave fixed in perpetuity at its height; and far on the left of the northern sands, the dying embers of day were going out spark by spark on the hills around Hackness.

I turned from the church-yard and the Castle Hill, down the lane by the long ropery. Suddenly my ear caught a voice, — or a voice caught my ear, whichever may best please the critics of the twentieth century,

should they ever reach this passage, — I mean, should this passage ever reach them. But there *was* a voice, — the voice of a female, — and that female was singing, — singing in the dark, — singing in the ropery, — singing alone. How do you know that she was alone? somebody or something enquires in my ear. Truly I know not; for, if you will believe me, I did not go to see, and though it is more than I can swear, it is not more than I think, that she *was* alone; I heard nobody else, and I doubt whether I could have distinguished any thing at all, even if I had ventured to peep into the dismal, low alley, where this syren was warbling like the lady in Comus, lost in the wood, and calling on “sweet echo” to tell her

“Of a lovely pair,
That likest her Narcissus were.”

Like that benighted fair one's, too, the voice of this invisible girl in the ropery was of magic power and pathos, — in my imagination, I ought to say, for in reality it was

more akin to the owl's than the nightingale's; and if I had Milton in my hand, instead of my forgetful head, I could adorn this page with some mellifluous lines about tones and cadences, that sank, and swelled, and breathed enchantment through the loop-holes of her promenade,

“ At every fall, smoothing the raven-down
Of Darkness till it smiled.”

I did not smile; — in truth, a very melancholy feeling came over me, and I passed lightly on, lest my footsteps should disturb her, break the spell, and perhaps bring the lady-minstrel upon me, while the strain rang through my head, and tingled along my veins; — but I scorn to be either sentimental or censorious here. She might be an innocent, unfortunate creature, — Mary, the maniac, or poor Ellen, the heart-broken, — but I could not help fearing that she was more unfortunate than either. I left her then, I leave her now, in the obscurity in which I found her; in the whole pathway of my life I cannot find a stone to throw at her, and if I could,

I would sooner break my own head with it than fling it, even at random, into the place where she was parading, though no more likely to hit the singer than the sounds that came from her lips. I went home in rumination.

September 15.

This day being the anniversary of the Lancasterian schools, I attended. Happening to be recognised, I was asked, of course, to make a speech, — and I made a speech of course. But what did you say? — That is more than I can recollect now, or they that heard me either, I suspect. The chronology of it was at least three thousand years, (yet the oration itself was not quite so long,) and the geography, that of the world; for I went as far back as the buildings of the Pyramids, and as much east and west as the sun does in twenty-four hours. I am sure I have now recorded enough to satisfy any reasonable enquirer, of this never-to-be-forgotten speech, for a speech may be remembered, though

every syllable of it be forgotten. I appeal to all the ears under straw-bonnets that have ever been brought into such anniversary meetings in town or country, if this be not emphatically true.

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September 16.

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I concluded Guy Mannering this evening, and though “there are a thousand faults in this book, yet a thousand things might be said to prove them beauties,” as some facetious writer (I think Goldsmith, in his preface to the Vicar of Wakefield,) has shrewdly observed. I will leave as many beauties and faults as I found in these volumes, to those who come after me, — for I should be sorry to deprive them of any of the pleasure which I enjoyed in the perusal; and who is not aware that there may be quite as much pleasure in discovering the one as the other in a production of first-rate genius? Those who cannot

testify this from happy experience, are ill qualified to set up for critics. To me, I confess, that one great charm of this performance is, the apparent want of premeditated arrangement, whereby it is almost impossible to anticipate any thing that is to come till it is just upon you, and you are prepared perfectly to understand it, without effort. The work itself is like a handful of leaves, torn at random out of the common-place book of nature, comprehending just those incidents in the life of each of the characters, which happened to come into contact, within the date and locality of the story, whether essential to it or not. *

* After further acquaintance with this author's productions, I will not shrink from saying, — at the hazard of being branded for a puritan or a covenanter myself, — that a better work than any new one which he could now give would be a revisal of his multifarious novels, for the express purpose of striking out all the *unnecessary* oaths and blasphemies employed by his avowed reprobates, which would reduce the ribaldry of this kind, at least one half. The fearful profanation of Scripture by his hypocrites and fanatics, — nay, even by his sincere pietists, from ludicrous association, — is too deeply burnt into the characters to be expurgated by any human process.

September 17.

Being Sunday I went to church in the forenoon. The preacher, — a stranger whose name I could not learn, and was therefore the more curious to know it, — gave us an excellent missionary sermon, but there was no collection after it. — In the afternoon I went to * * * * chapel, where a plain, unlettered man spoke of what he knew; and when a man does so, especially a man of God, he speaks as one having authority, so that even the infidel and the scorner may well be astonished, and exclaim, as of old, “Whence hath this man this learning?”

This day was one of the most splendid in the train of autumn. After morning-service I walked on the Castle Hill; — sky, earth, and ocean, all above, beneath, around. The whole temple of nature was opened: happy are they, and they only are happy, who can there, or any where, worship the Father in spirit and in truth! There is a halcyon beauty of repose upon the sea at noon, which has been little celebrated by poets, and which

is beyond the reach of painting. When the sun shines high and clear in the firmament, the watery champaign, as seen from an eminence, spreads out into immensity, exhibiting every hue of cool and delicate colouring, line beyond line to the uttermost horizon, as if the surface were traced with parallel pathways, of varying breadth, and undefinable termination, — beryl and emerald, amethyst and pearl, — while the image of the sun, diffused upon the deep, in a flood of restless and insufferable lustre, pours all his glory at the feet of the spectator. “It brings to my mind,” said a friend to me one day, “that pure river of water of life, which St. John saw, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.”

September 18.

This morning I had determined to devote to some rhyming exercises, but as I seldom keep a resolution when I can help it, I fell to prosing, — *that*, indeed, I might have done in verse, — and taking up the sheets of paper

devoted to my journal, I continued that interesting record, (resembling a piece of Mosaic work made up of bits of broken recollections,) from page 26. line 6. (see the original manuscript) to this point, (page 36. of the same,) where I must stop till something else happens worthy of immortal oblivion in these pages, which Time will devour at a mouthful, for having consumed more of him than I dare venture to tell.

Well, it *has* happened; — something, truly worthy of being remembered no more for ever, occurred in this room just after I had concluded the foregoing sentence. It lasted half an hour, and though the circumstance especially to be forgotten occupied less than two minutes of that time, the whole transaction must be buried here with no other epitaph than this note of interrogation (?) which shall never be answered till the world's end.

Something else, however, may be snatched from the same annihilating fate, which I neglected to put down among the events of yesterday. During my walk at noon, having

left my windows open, I found, by an infallible token on the table at my return, that a bird had paid a pop-visit in my sitting-room. I am sorry that the little fellow, (for I am sure that it was neither goose nor sea-gull,) did not find me at home. Whether tomtit or sparrow ; — by the bye, the sparrows here are very bold and troublesome on the public roads ; one is forced to step aside for fear of treading upon them, and then — away they fly, whirring with their wings across your face, and startling you more than you have startled them : — well, but whether tomtit or sparrow, I would have given the pretty visitor a month's board and lodging for a feather out of his tail, which should have been one in my own cap as long as my fame shall endure, for I would have fixed it in a sonnet, and interwoven it with my laurels. While I am writing this vainglorious sentence, a robin red-breast is singing his September song, brief, pensive, sweet, from an apple-tree in the garden before my window ; and as I understand as much of the language of birds

as any body since the days of Sultan —— : I forget his name, — I will try to translate his namby-pamby.

* * * * *

Here I began, but bungled so miserably in the three first lines, — the whole song consisted of only four, — that I will proceed no further, except to burn what I have done : — suffice it to say, that he tells me, in dactyls and spondees of inimitable sweetness, — and yet *English* has been called the language of birds, on account of its *sibilants*, — that it either *was* or was *not* himself, who came into my cage, in my absence yesterday ; but if I want to know more, I must “ whistle for it.” And so I would, if I could whistle as well as you, cock-robin !

When I had written thus far, I ran out to catch a mouthful of fresh air before dinner. As I turned the corner of the street by N——’s brewery, on the way to the Castle Hill, I perceived a scuffle of some kind, which I could not easily understand. Two ladies, — not farmers’ wives, I’ll warrant them, though jolly

enough to be such, — who were returning through the fields from the North-sands, had been stopt at the stile next to the road, consisting of a little gate turning to and fro, in a triangular enclosure of two stone-walls, and the gable-end of an old barn, so as to admit one person of reasonable capacity to slip through sideways, provided no other equally reasonable being were trying to pass, at the same time, in the opposite direction. The ladies were evidently in huge consternation, and not only struggled to force their way against some obstruction, but cried out amain for assistance, which a stout damsel (Juno or Pallas, perhaps Cytherea herself in disguise,) from the brewery premises, was hastening to render them. Just as she arrived, one of the distressed ladies leaped, (I don't know whether she did not fly, at any rate it was a flying leap,) clear from the turnstile into the road. Had she been Columbine, she need not have been ashamed of her performance. I then discovered the cause of their embarrassment; — a clucking hen, with half a

dozen whistling chickens, running in as many directions, was disputing the pass with the ladies, and defending it on the side of the road, as gallantly as the Straits of Thermopylæ were contested of yore, by Leonidas and his brood of Spartans, against the Persian millions of Xerxes. Dame Partlet, however, did not fall in the conflict; but being now beset behind by the lady who had jumped over her head, aided by the amazon from the brewery, — and at the same time resolutely pressed by the enemy in front, who had not yet disengaged herself from the intricacy of the stile, — she was compelled to dart aside for a moment, her wings carrying her a few inches to the right by mere fury of fluttering. In that lucky interval, the passage was effected, without loss of time or blood, by the second lady; and when the hen returned to the charge, which she did with redoubled courage, lowering her pinions to strike with them, her antagonists were marching off, literally, with flying colours, shaking and composing their gay garments

as they went. The wife of Chanticleer, after cackling with feminine fluency and masculine bravado, for a second or two, changed her note, called together her scattered chickens, — which I presume the ladies had accidentally divided between the field and the road, and thus provoked the matron to give them battle, — and scuttled away with her convoy into the adjacent barn-yard. “Thou art a noble bird,” thought I: “none of thine eggs should be fried with collops or mixed up in puddings; they should all be hatched by thyself, and all produce cocks, — except one in every clutch, to scratch in the steps of her mother, — that would be the glory of every dunghill in the North-Riding; for better game than thou art never clapt a wing, or crew at daybreak.”

In the evening I went to take tea with Mr. R. jun. and his sisters. I was uncommonly talkative, — the consequence of holding my peace so much of late, — though I remember nothing that I said worth repeating here, — or *there* either for the matter of that.

I returned by way of the sands. The night was lovely ; the moon was shining on the sea, — a gibbous moon, not overpowering the stars, but shedding the softest radiance that visits this earth, and which seems indeed the daylight of a gentler world than ours ; the sky, meanwhile, intensely blue ; the mountains of aërial grey where they met the beam, and dark to blackness where they turned their ridges from it. The tide was down, but the murmuring ran, and swelled, and broke, — renewed, returned, retired again, as the rippling waves were seen in wreaths of foam and glittering circlets, all along the beach and bays to Filey-Bridge.

September 19.

* * * * *

In the evening, and after sunset, feeling not very lively, I determined to take a walk to the top of Oliver's Mount. Accordingly I hurried on at a great pace, till I arrived at the foot of the main eminence. There, in-

stead of following the road, (as wise men, and men who are not on their own legs, do; the one from choice, and the other from necessity,) which gradually and circuitously winds up the slope, I attempted the steep ascent, and began to climb the face of the mountain, (as I have done many a time when I was young and enterprising,) making way with invincible perseverance, on hands, and feet and knees, catching by the grass and the heather, and threading the mazes of whins and fern, like a vessel tacking against wind and tide, without looking once behind, lest I should grow giddy and topple down headlong,—till I stood, like an eagle, perched on the utmost height, with sea and land unrolled, like a mighty divers-coloured map, far, far beneath my panorama resting-place. There is something inexpressibly sublime and transporting in such a situation; and here, though my breath panted, my knees trembled with fatigue, and I could hear my heart beating like a death-watch within me, I was carried out of myself, and became another being

while I contemplated the scene. My eye was enlarged to take in the prospect: I felt as though I had the power of self-expansion over the whole horizon. It was not, however, a spectacle of splendour, the atmosphere being grey and dim, the glory of sunset having faded, and a blue mist from the sea mantling the inner bay, and throwing a welcome obscurity over the town; yet the castle-ruins, rising above the haze, and seen against the broad ocean, far-stretching beyond the peninsula which they crown; the purple darkness of the inland hills; the boldly winding coast from Robin Hood's Bay to Flamborough Head, all along which, so far as the eye could distinguish, the full tide, just on the turn, played in white breakers, or in silver crescents, following the sinuosities of the shore; the mingled sounds of men, and animals, and carriages, accompanied by the everlasting music of the waves; all these below: and, in the heavens, the moon low-gliding towards the south, and golden-tinctured as she is in autumn; the planet Jupiter peering

out of the east, midway over "the Roads," as the course of the coasting vessels is called; a few scattered sails, at different distances, and in contrary directions, marking the bosom of the deep; while, westward, the clouds that had been the gorgeous tapestry of the sun's evening chamber were now sombre and stationary, and gave their own hue to the wolds beneath them:—all these, in one moment, I may say, outspread in perfect harmony, so consentaneously impressed both thought and vision, that it was the whole at once, not any part, that possessed me, as if my very soul had been a *camera obscura*, consciously receiving, reflecting, and enjoying every image around me. But yet the infirmity of the flesh overcame the vivacity of the spirit: my blood was all in tumult with the exertion of climbing, and I was compelled to move gently from the spot, lest it should be changed from flame to ice. To bring down my combustible frame to a living temperature, I walked along the ridge of the mountain, expatiating with eye and mind over all the

diversities of the landscape and the main, which I now leisurely, yet capriciously surveyed, glancing from one point to another, and settling on none; my thoughts were all feelings,—for feeling and thinking are sometimes so indefinitely blended, that they are one, like the warmth and light of the sun. This may read very much like nonsense; but if any into whose hands these papers may fall, when I part with them, should find fault in cold blood, may they never promenade on Mount Oliver, when

“ The moonshine stealing through the gloom
Is blended with the tints of eve.”

But should these reveries pass before the eyes of fair readers and kind ones, may their good genius lead them to the elevation where I was walking,—but not by the neck-breaking way which I took to it,—at the close of some happy day, when they are willing to be pleased, and their spirits are in tune with all that is beautiful on earth; then, should they

afterwards attempt to describe either the scene or their emotions, they will find themselves discoursing like those who talk in their sleep, with inquietude of delight.

When I set out I had not calculated on the brevity of the equinoctial twilight; and darkness was doubling beneath, while I seemed to wander in an element of light, like one of the stars that were kindling above me. But I soon found it necessary to retreat; and as I durst not return by the way I came, lest my head should perform the part of my feet, I chose the eastern path along the eminence, expecting to reach a branch of the Filey Road, which I distinguished below, like a white line running betwixt the green pastures at the foot of Oliver, and the black cliffs of the serpentine coast. I walked, and walked, and walked, further and further, as it seemed, (while I hoped to come nearer and nearer,) both from that road and from Scarborough, my back being at length fairly turned on the latter. “This cannot be the way home,” methought, “unless I go round

the world to it :” then losing patience, I was glad to take the first turn that offered, in the diametrically opposite direction of that which I had wished to go. The shades grew thick, as I grew fretful, and the gloom seemed to enter into my soul ; all those glowing ecstasies were gone ; and weary, bewildered, impatient, I travelled on the newly-discovered track, like one not lost *yet*, but certain to be so ere long. Sorry I am *now*, though heartily rejoiced *then*, that this comfortless foreboding was not realized, for it would have been “ charming,”—“ Oh how charming !” as the young ladies that live in novels (and never lived any where else) say, when, in the middle of a neat duodecimo, they are involved in some delightful embarrassment, from which they are sure to be extricated when the reader turns over the next leaf ; but these damsels in distress have led me astray, as they have often done in my sentimental days, when Clementina, Celestina, Evelina, and hundreds more of the ineffable sisterhood, were my every-day acquaintance. “ Oh how charm-

ing!" then, I repeat after them, would it have been the next morning, to retrace in imagination, and on this paper to rehearse, the adventures of the night, had I been forced to pass it in the open air, in a region as unknown to me as the back-woods of America! No such romantic luck was mine. I paced along in trepidation for a quarter of an hour, when I perceived, at a division of the road, that if I followed the inclination of my right elbow I should reach Scarborough before midnight,—aye, four hours before it.

Still my nerves were in such *Æolian* tune, that every breeze shook melancholy music from them. "I have not much money about me,—so much the worse for my life,—pshaw! nobody will take the trouble to murder me:—if I meet robbers in this wilderness, my watch, no doubt, will satisfy them!" My head was full of gipsies, smugglers, and banditti, from the recent perusal of *Guy Mannering* and the *Heart of Mid Lothian*, when, as I came to a rude plantation on the western declivity of the mount, I spied a figure in motion be-

fore me in the hollow way. Feminine it seemed by the light-coloured drapery, and it might have been Meg Merrilies herself by the stature. Whether it was advancing towards me, or passing forward, I could not distinguish, nor was I quite sure that it was not an image of my own conjuring up, the magic-lantern of my brain having by this time converted the visible horizon into one vast theatre of phantasmagoria. Just then, bounce out of the wood, full into the middle of the road, under my very nose, came a logger-headed hound; and though I saw in an instant what the apparition was in reality, I started back, grew cold from top to toe, and trembled at every joint. It went as quickly as it came. “The dog or your fright, sir?” Both, at your service, gentle madam; for none but a lady would ask so pertinent a question. The hound, who had been hunting alone,—he had a sheep-stealing look,—ran on before me, with his nose to the ground, in many a zig-zag, as if there were a secret in the wind, which none but himself

could find out. I followed in as right a line as I could keep, not going over half the ground, and yet not making half the way, that Old Towler did, so that he soon disappeared. It was not long before the spectral image, which I had been looking after, when his unexpected irruption from the wood blinded me to every thing except his own lithe limbs, and indefatigable tail, appeared again in the veritable shape of a poor woman, but neither witch nor giantess; and yet she was two feet taller than any lady that I know. Ladies, just named, and ever honoured, if you see this, you need not be frightened, for you would not have been frightened if you had seen *her*: she was indeed two feet, perhaps a yard taller than herself, by a great bundle of harvest-gleanings which she carried on her head. Neither the bulk nor weight of this did I ascertain, though it would only have been a neighbour's turn to lend her my own head and shoulders to carry it a little way for her. This I confess I had not the charity to do, though she was obliged to pitch

it upon a wall, as I passed by, and there I left her standing to rest. But I *had* the charity to wish her burthen twice as heavy as it was, being assured that the greater the weight on her head, the lighter it would lie on the poor woman's heart, and the more merrily would her children (I hope she has a house full of them) dance and sing "Harvest Home," when she arrived at her threshold.

September 20.

Dark, cold, rainy, tempestuous. I stole out for a quarter of an hour before breakfast, but was driven back by stress of weather, and kept in port all day, except a few minutes at noon.

* * * * *

This is the first day that I have had a fire in my room in the forenoon; for coals are so miserably dear in this country, that I can scarcely find in my heart to burn those of my landlady, who, to secure me as a tenant in her drawing-room, instead of the parlour, engaged to find me in fuel; — and here

they might literally be *live-coals*, and feel the flames in which they expire, people light them so unwillingly, poker them with such tenderness, and take up their ashes with so much remorse.

September 21.

Early, — indeed too early for my repose, — the sun was at my chamber-window, rejoicing in his renovated strength, and filling the room with his glory, through the white curtains that surrounded me. In spite of his exultation and importunity, I lay nearly two hours longer; then rose and looked forth upon as brilliant and beautiful a morning as ever September led out of the east. When I got down upon the beach, instead of inhaling the freshness of the breeze, with heavenward countenance, or gazing untired on the ever-varying tide, I fell to pebble-hunting, which is very much like falling into a brown study, the attention being soon and entirely absorbed in this profound but unprofitable research. On former visits to Scarborough I have abandoned myself hour

after hour to these reveries, without consciousness of fatigue, as the idle occupation, while it gently exercises the limbs, intensely engages the mind, and yet does not exhaust it like reading or close meditation : for here the intellect being in the eye, and having nothing to do but to look through the window of the head at such objects as present themselves in successive images before it, amuses itself with ideas in the palpable forms of agates, carnelians, and chalcedonies, of every tincture in the rainbow. But, like other frivolous pursuits, pebble-hunting is very provoking and disappointing. You gather pearls and jewels to the sight, while sparkling with the brine ; but when you empty your pockets at your lodgings, their lustre is vanished, and you spread your table with dingy pieces of quartz, and flint, and spar, only fit to mend the highways. If, by ill luck, you have found something a little better, it is just so much the worse for yourself, since you must needs have it cut and polished for a ring or a brooch ; so you carry

it to Katterfelto's daughter, whose husband has given her a better name than that she was born to, though not a thousandth part so renowned. She lives in Long-room Street, and inherits her father's great loadstone, and the magnet with which he used to suspend his three black cats in the air, when

—— “Katterfelto, with his hair on end,
At his own wonders wonder'd for his bread.”

COWPER.

Alas! the philosopher, whose solar microscope could exhibit in a drop of water a scene not less appalling than an African wilderness, inhabited by monsters more ravenous than lions, hyenas, and leopards, in shapes as horrible

“As ever fables feign'd, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire:—”
(MILTON.)

The philosopher and the multitude of his admiring audiences are dead. — But I have eloped with the father from the daughter,

just when I was going to introduce you to her. Here, however, she is, in this little dark shop, the counter covered with curious stones from the coast, rough or polished, and the floor so crowded with other more unwieldy articles, that when you can stand upright before her, you may deem yourself happy to be able to present your gems for her inspection. She looks with a cunning cast of the eye at them, as if she could see further into a stone than other folks, and pronounces nine out of ten to be good for nothing. These you are glad to drop secretly by the way, as you go home, lest any body should suspect that you had been so silly as to gather such rubbish. Two or three, however, are deemed worthy of being put to the test of her husband's polishing apparatus; these she keeps, and bids you call again the day after to-morrow. It will be well if you can eat, drink, and sleep in the interval; but if not, two days are not an eternity, though to you they will be an age; you may probably, therefore, survive, and then hurry off

to Long-room Street with the anxiety of an adventurer who is about to examine a lottery-register. You receive your precious stones, one with a crack, another a foul speck in it, and the third altogether a *waster*. The charge is from sixpence to a crown, and if you have not yet wit enough for your money, you may take them to the jeweller's in * * * * *, and he will set them in gold at any price you please to pay for additional wisdom. This will teach you to spend neither your time nor your treasure on things that you do not want, or if you did, which you might have purchased better and cheaper of either of the persons whom you have employed in decorating a bauble, only valuable because you yourself had the misfortune to stumble upon it.

Till this morning, I had not before (on my present visit) entered into the spirit of pebble-hunting, and now, though I followed the sport eagerly, I do not know that the only specimen which I ventured to bring away will bear the touchstone. As we grow

older, I presume we grow wiser ; at least I am willing to take this credit to myself ; — and yet, if it be because I am wiser, that I have less delight in nutting than I had when I was a boy, or in pebble-hunting than I once had since I was a man by my beard, I am sorry that in taking away the taste for these pleasures, puerile and undignified as they are, my wisdom has not substituted something nobler to occupy the time which I used to waste in them. Yet I do feel that it is unworthy of me, trifler as I am, to be poring through a pair of spectacles on the sand, turning over the wreck of sea-weed with the end of a stick, or ferreting with my fingers among the gravel, while the magnificent ocean is rolling at my feet, and telling me, in a voice that speaks through all ages, that the surge which has just left its foam-wreath on the low rock where I am stepping, obeys an impulse, communicated to the waters of the great deep at the beginning of time, and which will keep them in perpetual motion round the globe till the dissolution of

nature. After all, the pebble-hunter is not an utterly contemptible being, for the wisest of uninspired mortals was not ashamed to compare himself to one. Sir Isaac Newton, being complimented on the extent and variety of his sublime discoveries, unaffectedly replied, — “I am only like a person walking on the shore, who has picked up here and there a more curious shell, or a brighter pebble than his companions, while the great ocean of undiscovered truth lies before me.” — Quoting from memory, I find that I have mixed the metaphor, but it is beyond my skill to simplify it.

After a long chase this morning, I was starved into a surrender of the tempting pursuit, and returned home to breakfast, as hungry as other hunters are wont to be.

In the course of the forenoon there came on a storm of thunder and lightning, but it soon passed away. Thunder and lightning in every place, but especially here, remind me, with fearful foreboding, of what happened fifteen years ago. It was on the

morning after my arrival at Scarborough in the season of 1805, I walked out upon the Castle Hill. I had just been reading, among other things, in Mr. Hinderwell's interesting history of the town, that though thunderstorms were as frequent here as elsewhere, they had seldom (I believe he says *never*) been recollected to have produced fatal effects. As I rambled and ruminated, the sun, the sea, the sky, the coast were in their richest glory, and my spirits exquisitely susceptible of their harmonizing influence, for I had risen from my bed as lively as a snake that leaves his slough behind, after a winter's sleep; and I, after having been miserably exhausted with travelling and want of rest for eight-and-forty hours before, had slumbered as soundly, if not as long as the reptile; so that I enjoyed with all my soul and senses the freshness, the brilliance, and beauty of nature around me. In a short time, however, clouds gathered, and a sudden shower compelled me to make a hasty retreat. On the way I perceived a faint gleam of light-

ning and a low peal of thunder, but I had scarcely reached my quarters, and sate down with several other visitors, at our drawing-room window, which overlooked the beach and the bay, when a torrent of fire, in apparently perpendicular descent, fell from the blackness above, and was instantaneously accompanied by an explosion of thunder that seemed to spend itself on the roof of the house, bounding, rebounding, and shaking the fabric to the foundation. I and my companions instinctively ran to the farther end of the room, covering our faces, and not knowing but that the next moment we might all meet in eternity. The alarm soon subsided, and the tempest passed away almost as hastily as it had collected; but it left a record that it *had* been, which I can never forget while I remember myself. The lightning — the reddest, broadest, fiercest sheet of flame I ever beheld — had struck, within a few hundred yards of the house where I was sheltered, a ship on the stocks, where it killed three men, — one at work on

the deck, another within the hulk, (sparing his comrade close at his side,) and a third under the bow; at the same time blinding and deranging in his senses a little boy, who was gathering chips beneath the scaffolding. The third victim of this tremendous visitation was a venerable and pious old man, belonging to the Baptist church here; — when the first flash came, he had remarked to some by-standers, “God is riding in his chariot of fire to-day.” — It was not long (as I have ventured to say since) before the chariot descended and caught him up to the place whither Elijah was carried.

A few evenings after the aforementioned circumstance, (in 1805,) I happened to be on the parade at the Spa-House, to watch the tide going down, where, from the repercussion of the wooden walls of that humble fortification, the conflict between the waves retiring and those advancing, as they intermingle and dash each other into foam, is at all times strikingly interesting to a landsman, but on this occasion was peculiarly magni-

ficent, there being a brisk gale and a heavy swell from the north-east. As the sun went down, the clouds thickened, and a sharp shower coming on, I took refuge in the Spa-House news-room, and began to read the papers. The rain not abating so speedily as I expected, and the darkness deepening within doors and without, I began to feel anxiety respecting my escape, particularly when frequent though pale streaks of lightning, followed by the murmur of far distant thunder, illumined the horizon. The hurricane increased, and ere long it was in full march over the sea directly towards the place of my confinement, while just on the opposite side of the bay, as long as daylight continued, the skeleton-vessel, which had been recently smitten, was distinguishable from the window out of which I frequently peeped "into the mingling storm." In spite of all my resolution to maintain tranquillity, my agitation grew violent, and while my eyes ran over the columns of the journals before me, and I tried to persuade myself that I was

attentively perusing them, not a thought or a syllable remained in recollection for more than an instant. Meanwhile the twilight failed, and the tempest blackened, narrowing its space and coming down upon the deep; — the lightnings blazed nearer and brighter, — the thunders rolled louder and longer at every return. I got up and walked backward and forward, being alone in the desolate apartment, where I had remarked nothing particular but bare walls, an old table with a few chairs in one corner, and a wooden bench running along three sides. There was something else, however; and something that had motion, if not life, as I found to my no small surprize. In the midst of this alarm within and terror abroad, when my nerves were fretted to the highest excitement of morbid sensibility, a stroke — it might have been a stroke of lightning — suddenly electrified my whole frame, and made me start and tremble with amazement; for it was some seconds before I was sufficiently collected to understand that it was only the stroke of a

crazy clock, stuck against the wall, at the lower end of the room, innocently announcing the hour of eight. This was a peremptory warning to quit the place, unless I meant to remain there all night, — where, truly, there was nothing very tempting. I went to the door, and was looking out like a fox from his covert, when the governor of the Spa came from his house adjoining, to shut the windows of the news-room. “It is a dismal wet night, sir,” said I, ruefully eying him. “Yes,” replied his excellency; “and I see you have no great coat, sir:” — but as he neither offered to lend me one, nor invited me to shelter by his fire-side, I was too diffident or too stubborn to ask a favour at such a time; so buttoning myself up to the chin, I bade him good night, and ran off. As I followed the winding track of the sands to my lodgings, the storm was at its height, — blowing, raining, thundering, lightning, while in the uproar of elements it seemed as though the cliffs were falling into the sea before, behind, and over my head. They

stood, however, and they stand to this day, as the three cows can testify that graze on their slopes, and regularly come down to the beach, and chew the cud there with imperturbable tranquillity, while chariots and horses, gigs, sulkies, and sociables, men, women, and children, are moving in a hundred directions around them. Such a spectacle I witnessed this morning, which brings me from August **, 1805, to Sept. 21. 1820.

How different an evening has this been from that which is commemorated in the foregoing paragraph ! The storm of to-day having cleared off, I rambled after sunset to Falsgrave. Close by the road-side here, there is a village-statuary's establishment, where, though millstones and watering-troughs are exhibited for sale, the artist's principal occupation seems to be the sculpture of monuments for the dead, which he manufactures in great variety of form and ornament, wholesale, and for exportation too, one might presume ; for it is difficult to imagine how the local demand for superb

tombstones could warrant a stock of fifty or sixty on hand at once. It is true, that there is no ordinary rage for such luxuries at Scarborough; the church-yard of which presents the most crowded scene of these vain but affectionate mementos that I have known. Should any of my friends see these pages, and feel a desire — for who would like to be forgotten? — to have the posthumous renown of a speaking tablet standing at their head when it lies low, and setting forth their virtues, or imploring compassion for their frailties, I would recommend this ingenious artist, whatever be his name, as very competent to do justice — not indeed to their merits, but to that sense of them which they will have when they are in the grave; for I am persuaded that the best of those whom I love will then deem any record of their birth and death sufficient. But if, while living, any of them should choose to be like other folks when they are dead, and if they are sure that they could forgive the fondness of surviving relatives in placing a gorgeous

blazonry above their mouldering dust, then they may select forthwith one or other of the following patterns, which I marked as ready executed, but which are in imminent danger of being carried off by others, standing as they do by the highway-side, and offering allurements so attractive to passengers,—

“ That kings for such a monument might wish
to die :”

Wreaths of laurel and bays ; a salient arrow, and reverted torch ; a book, the best of books, open, and a leaf on the right hand folded down (left blank for the inscription of any text that might be preferred) ; an anchor, with a huge coil of cable ; a trumpet and a scythe crossed ; an hour-glass, with a crucifix leaning against it ; an angel flying, — and a miraculous flight he takes, for, truly, it would require the power of an angel so to fly,—bolt upright, presenting his whole front from head to foot to the resistance of the air ; *cum multis aliis*, to suit every taste and character of the surviving and the departed.

More thoughts than I dare utter were suggested by the sight of these preparations for death, made like those for an execution, while the victim is in full health ! I will only mention one. Some future Chantrey, perhaps, may first exercise his chisel here on a blacksmith's tombstone, who shall afterwards illustrate Westminster-abbey or St. Paul's cathedral with national trophies to unborn Nelsons and Wellingtons. Yon little curled, cherry-cheeked, black-eyed boy, half-naked and half-frantic with exuberance of animal spirits, — who is dabbling in the mire with more delight than the ducks in the neighbouring pool, refreshed as it is by the late thunder shower, — that busy boy may be put apprentice to this good man in the leathern apron ; and, if not from his master, yet by some means, unimaginable, by me (since genius once awakened cannot be held in ignorance,) he may learn to make the dead live in marble, and himself immortal by so doing ! “ Fudge ! ” says somebody, I know not who ; and “ Fudge ! ” say I, most cordially

in return ; for if I had guessed half as much concerning Chantrey himself when I first knew him, “ somebody ” would have said “ Fudge ! ” then.

About two hundred yards from this manufactory, there is one of the most grotesque memorials of mortality that ever was compiled by human hands. At first view I thought it was a wall of skulls, embedded together, the hollow sides outwards, and it was some time, with my small skill in cranio-logy, before I could interpret the puzzle. It was in fact a bank of earth, (on the ridge of which grew a quickset-hedge,) with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the sloughs or cores of the horns of oxen thrust into the face of it the root ends, with fragments of the scull-bones, being turned outwards. At one extremity of this embrasure lay an old milestone, with the letters and figures so defaced as to be illegible, which having come to its journey’s end, (though it may not, till it fell, have stirred from its post for a century,) was here half buried in the ground, morally

and picturesquely representing the state to which men as well as milestones must come. There is something affecting even in the fate of inanimate things, when they are past service, and thrown aside in neglect.

* * * * *

Returning from Falsgrave, I ascended into Scarborough church-yard, and took my stand among the multitude of tombs, which being principally white upright stones, black-lettered and sculptured above, presented a singularly chequered appearance on the dark verdure of the ground, the moonlight streaming upon their faces, and their shadows projecting behind. The beauty, solemnity, and grandeur of the hour were deeply transporting, and while the eye ranged over the prospect, each feature in succession awakened distinct yet undefinable emotions. Far on the right Oliver's Mount confronted the Castle-cliff on my left; the former naked and sombre; the latter rising precipitately from the pier, receiving the moon-beams aslant on its pale-green declivity; its summit

crowned with the ruined tower and grey battlements, — once formidable fortifications, now the wrecks of past ages, which time has only spared to show his triumphs over men and their works. Below lay the town; but there was little inducement to contemplate its red-tiled roofs and black chimnies, while the tide was glittering in the bay, with innumerable waves, and the ocean stretching beyond, as though it reached to eternity. The firmament was perfectly serene: it was a gala-night in heaven, where the moon in full majesty, enthroned between the planets Jupiter and Saturn, at nearly equal distances, was shining so bright that none but the nobility of the sky, stars of the first and second magnitude, could be seen in her presence. As I stood listening to the swell and fall of waters beneath, contrasting that multitudinous roar with the perpetual silence of the churchyard around me, — the repose of the dead in their graves, with the restlessness of the surges on the beach, — a trumpet from the Castle sounded the evening-call for the sol-

diery to repair to their quarters. It was the very music for the moment and the scene; clear, shrill, and sonorous, searching through the ear for an echo in the recesses of the heart, and it found one as sweet but more significant there, than the responses that came like voices of invisible beings from the neighbouring hills, at every pause in the strain. I was reminded, and who in such a situation would not have been reminded, of "that day and that hour, whereof no man knoweth," when "the trumpet shall sound, the dead shall be raised, and we shall be changed." I went home in quiet thought.

THE
VOYAGE OF THE BLIND.

INTRODUCTION.

AFTER the first fall of Buonaparte, in 1814, Britain entered upon negotiations for peace, covered with glory and surrounded with conquests; she retired from the discussions with her glory doubled by the unextorted surrender of her conquests. But it is lamentable to recollect, that in the noblest act of disinterested justice, (justice having all the grace of generosity,) which her own high character ever called upon her to perform, — a concession was made on her behalf, by the plenipotentiary intrusted with her honour, which she utterly and abhorrently disavowed as soon as it was known. The decree, however, had gone forth, and the act was irrevocable: it need scarcely be added that the consequences have been as frightful as it was immediately

foretold that they would be, by the philanthropists, who had recently effected the abolition of the negro slave-trade in this country. The definitive treaty, at that time concluded, contained the following article :

“ His most Christian Majesty, concurring without reserve in the sentiments of his Britannic Majesty, with respect to a description of traffic repugnant to the principles of natural justice, and of the enlightened age in which we live, engages to unite all his efforts to those of his Britannic Majesty, at the approaching congress, to induce all the powers of Christendom to decree the abolition of the slave-trade, so that the said trade shall cease universally as it shall cease definitively, under any circumstances, on the part of the French government, in the course of five years ; and that during the said period no slave-merchant shall import or sell slaves, except in the colonies of the state to which he is a subject.”

This article acknowledged the iniquity of the slave-trade ; and yet authorized its prac-

tice by the French government for five years. Innumerable have been the instances of injustice *sanctioned* by treaties of peace; but surely this was the first time that injustice had been *avowed* and yet sanctioned. In the cabalistic jargon of diplomatists, the most flagrant usurpations of predominant villainy are wont to be coloured with pretences of forbearance; and the most reluctant concessions of humbled impotence are declared voluntary acts of independent power. It is an established homage which vice pays to virtue, in courts and cabinets (as well as elsewhere), to assume her character, and do every thing in her name: in this case, however, she violated her own *etiquette*, and, confessing her infamy, stipulated for an indulgence to riot in a crime so multiform, that no single term in human language comprehends the hundredth part of its atrocity, — the *slave-trade* alone can do this: the licences granted by the police of Paris to harlots to carry on their profession unmolested, are venial in comparison with the turpitude of the licence

in question, demanded by France, and granted by the ambassador of Britain, to carry on, — no, to *commit* the slave-trade ; for to *commit* the slave-trade is to commit fraud, violence, perjury, sacrilege, robbery, murder, treason, and every sin that is involved with, or incidental to the traffic in the bones and muscles of living men. As a deliberate recognition of wickedness in the principle of an article in a public treaty, between two nations professing Christianity, had thus far been unexampled in past ages, it is devoutly to be hoped, that this profligate precedent will never be copied in ages to come ; but that whatever wrong monarchs may be disposed to attempt, or diplomatists to confirm, all may be done as heretofore, under the decent cloak of honesty ; for the very affectation of virtue is a restraint upon vice, while enough of disposition will inevitably appear to betray her hypocrisy.

But the African slave-trade by France was not the *continuance* of a system already established, as in the case of Spain and Por-

tugal, — it was the *creation of a new slave-trade*. France had not, at the time, a foot of ground on the habitable globe to be cultivated by the toil and blood of a single negro: she had not a farthing embarked in that commerce of human misery: all her colonies had been conquered; and in all those colonies the slave-trade had actually been abolished by the *irreversible* decree of Great Britain, the absolute possessor of them; so that our cabinet had no more right to give back to France her West Indian islands and her African factories, with leave to *revive* the slave-trade there, than that cabinet had to revive the slave-trade in our own settlements, by a mere order in council: while, on the other hand, France had no more right to renew the horrid traffic where it had been annihilated, than she had to *legalise the crimes*, which the slave-trade comprehends, in any part of her empire, whether in the heart of Paris or on the shores of Guinea. *Would* the ministers of the Prince Regent of this United Kingdom have surrendered back those colonies, if

France had avowed an intention of making the hideous experiment in them of abolishing all civil authority, and expressly allowing robbery and murder there for five years? No; they and their successors would have remained at war for ever, rather than have come down to parliament with such an article in a treaty of peace, saying, “We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement;” (Isaiah, xxviii. 15.) — yet what did they less, when they signed the warrant for France to *commit* the slave-trade, — for however cacophonous the phrase, it shall not be retracted, — to *commit* the slave-trade for five years? They were deceived; and the writer of these strictures will not condemn them, for they knew not what they did; but they know it now; and the reparation which they owe to God and man for their error is this, — not only with all their power to urge the abolition of the slave-trade, by the nations of Europe, abroad, but with all their influence at home to promote the gradual abolition of slavery itself

in the British colonies. The five years granted to France to pursue the abominable traffic have expired, but the traffic is yet in full vigour. The fiendlike cruelty with which it is carried on by adventurers of that country is little known and less regarded in our own. Indifference is connivance in such a case; every man therefore, with a voice or a pen, who has heard of this evil under the sun, ought to express his detestation of it, or be considered an accomplice.

At the close of this article, two extracts from the "Fifteenth Report of the Directors of the African Institution, in 1821," shall be given, to show in what manner certain subjects of his most Christian Majesty carry on this branch of the merchandize of apocalyptic Babylon, — "slaves, and souls of men," — (Rev. xviii. 13.) years after their sovereign has abjured it. The imaginary fate of a slave-ship, which forms the subject of the following stanzas, is grounded upon the tragical circumstances detailed in the first of these extracts.

THE VOYAGE OF THE BLIND.

“ It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigg’d with curses dark.”

MILTON.

O’ER Africa the morning broke,
And many a negro-land reveal’d,
From Europe’s eye and Europe’s yoke,
In Nature’s inmost heart conceal’d ;
Here roll’d the Nile, his glittering train
From Ethiopia to the main ;
And Niger there uncoil’d his length,
Who hides his fountain and his strength
Among the realms of noon :
Casting away their robes of night,
Forth stood in nakedness of light,
The mountains of the moon.

Hush'd were the howlings of the wild ;
The leopard in his den lay prone ;
Man, while creation round him smil'd,
Was sad or savage, — man alone :
Down in the dungeons of Algiers,
The Christian captive woke in tears ;
Caffraria's lean, marauding race
Prowl'd forth on pillage or the chase ;
In Lybian solitude,
The Arabian horseman scour'd along ;
The caravan's obstreperous throng
Their dusty march pursued.

But woe grew frantic in the west ;
A wily rover of the tide
Had mark'd the hour of Afric's rest,
To snatch her children from her side :
At early dawn, to prospering gales,
The eager seamen stretch their sails ;
The anchor rises from its sleep
Beneath the rocking of the deep ;
Impatient from the shore
A vessel steals ; — she steals away,
Mute as the lion with his prey ;
— A human prey she bore.

Curst was her trade, and contraband,
Wherefore that keel by guilty stealth
Fled with the darkness from the strand,
Laden with living bales of wealth :
Fair to the eye her streamers play'd
With undulating light and shade ;
White from her prow the gurgling foam
Flew backward tow'rds the negro's home,
Like his unheeded sighs ;
Sooner that melting foam shall reach
His inland home, than yonder beach
Again salute his eyes.

Tongue hath not language to unfold
The secrets of the space between
That vessel's flanks, — whose dungeon-hold
Hides what the sun hath never seen ;
Three hundred writhing prisoners there
Breathe one mephitic blast of air
From lip to lip ; — like flame suppress,
It bursts from every tortured breast
With dreary groans and strong ;
Lock'd side to side, they feel by starts
The beating of each other's hearts,
— Their breaking, too, ere long.

Light o'er the blue untroubled sea,
Fancy might deem that vessel held
Her voyage to eternity,
By one unchanging breeze impell'd :
Eternity is in the sky,
Whose span of distance mocks the eye ;
Eternity upon the main,
The horizon there is sought in vain ;
Eternity below
Appears in heaven's reflected face ;
And on, through everlasting space,
The unbounded billows flow.

Yet while his wandering bark career'd,
The master knew, with stern delight,
That full for port her helm was steer'd
With aim unerring day and night.
Pirate ! that port thou ne'er shalt hail ;
Thine eye in search of it shall fail :
But lo ! thy slaves expire beneath ;
Haste, bring the wretches forth to breathe ;
Brought forth — away they spring,
And headlong in the whelming tide,
Rescued from thee, their sorrows hide
Beneath the halcyon's wing.

There came an angel of eclipse,
Who haunts at times the Atlantic flood,
And smites with blindness, on their ships,
The captives and the men of blood :
Here, in the hold, the blight began,
From eye to eye contagion ran ;
Sight, as with burning brands, was quench'd ;
None from the fiery trial blench'd,
But, panting for release,
They call'd on Death, who, close behind,
Summon'd the plague, to lead the blind
From agony to peace.

That pestilence no power could check ;
Unseen its withering arrows flew ;
It walk'd in silence on the deck,
And smote from stem to stern the crew :
As glow-worms dwindle in the shade,
As lamps in charnel-houses fade,
From every orb, with vision fired,
In flitting sparks the light retired :
The sufferers saw it go ;
And o'er the ship, the sea, the skies,
Pursued it with their failing eyes,
Till all was black below.

A murmur swell'd along the gale ;
All rose, and held their breath to hear ;
All look'd, but none could spy a sail,
And yet they knew a sail was near :
“ Help ! help ! ” our beckoning sailors cried ;
“ Help ! help ! ” a hundred tongues replied :
Then hideous clamour rent the air,
Questions and answers of despair :
Few words the mystery clear'd ;
The plague had found that second bark,
Where every eye but his was dark
Whose hand the vessel steer'd.

He, wild with panic, turn'd away,
And thence his shrieking comrades bore ;
From either ship the winds convey
Farewells, that soon are heard no more
A calm of horror hush'd the waves ;
Behold them ! — merchant, seamen, slaves,
The blind, the dying, and the dead,
All help, all hope, for ever fled,
Unseen, yet face to face !
Woe past, woe present, woe to come,
Held for a while each victim dumb,
—Impaled upon his place.

It is not in the blood of man
To crouch ingloriously to fate ;
Nature will struggle while she can ;
Misfortune makes her children great ;
The head, which lightning hath laid low,
Is hallow'd by the noble blow ;
The wretch, who yields a felon's breath,
Emerges from the cloud of death,
A spirit on the storm :
But virtue, perishing unknown,
Watch'd by the eye of Heaven alone,
Is earth's least earthly form.

What were the scenes on board that bark ?
The tragedy which none beheld ?
When (as the deluge bore the ark,)
By power invisible impell'd,
The keel went blindfold through the surge,
Where stream might drift or whirlwind urge :
Plague, famine, thirst, their numbers slew,
And frenzy seized the hardier few
Who yet were spared to try
How everlasting are the pangs,
When life upon a moment hangs,
And death stands mocking by.

Imagination's daring glance
May pierce that veil of mystery,
As in the rapture of a trance,
Things which no eye hath seen to see ;
And hear by fits along the gales,
Screams, maniac-laughter, hollow wails :
—— They stand, they lie, above, beneath,
Groans of unpitied anguish breathe,
Tears unavailing shed ;
Each, in abstraction of despair,
Seems to himself a hermit there,
Alive among the dead.

Yet respite, — respite from his woes,
Even here, the conscious sufferer feels ;
Worn down by torture to repose,
Slumber the vanish'd world reveals :
Ah ! then the eyes, extinct in night,
Again behold the blessed light ;
Ah ! then the frame of rack'd disease
Lays its delighted limbs at ease ;
Swift to his own dear land
The unfetter'd slave with shouts returns ;
Hard by, his dreaming tyrant burns
At sight of Cuba's strand.

To blank reality they wake,
In darkness opens every eye :
Peace comes ; — the negro's heart-strings
break,
To him 'tis more than life to die ;
How feels, how fares the man of blood ?
In endless exile on the flood,
Rapt, as though fiends his vessel steer'd,
Things which he once believed and fear'd,
— Then scorn'd as idle names, —
Death, judgment, conscience, hell conspire,
With thronging images of fire,
To light up guilt in flames.

Who cried for mercy in that hour,
And found it on the desert sea ?
Who to the utmost grasp of power,
Wrestled with life's last enemy ?
Who, Marius-like, defying fate,
(Marius on fallen Carthage,) sate ?
Who, through a hurricane of fears,
Clung to the hopes of future years ?
And who, with heart unquail'd,
Look'd from Time's trembling precipice
Down on Eternity's abyss,
Till brain and footing fail'd ?

Is there among this crew not One,
One whom a widow'd mother bare,
Who mourns far off her only son,
And pours for him her soul in prayer?
Even now, — when o'er his soften'd thought
Remembrance of her love is brought,
To soothe death's agony, and dart
A throb of comfort through his heart, —
Even now a mystic knell
Sounds through *her* pulse; — she lifts her eye,
Sees a pale spirit passing by,
And hears *his* voice — “farewell.”

Mother and son shall meet no more:
— The floating tomb of its own dead,
That ship shall never reach a shore;
But far from track of seamen led,
The sun shall watch it day by day,
Careering on its lonely way;
Month after month, the moon shine pale
On falling mast and riven sail;
The stars, from year to year,
Mark the bulged flank, and sunken deck,
Till not an atom of the wreck
On ocean's face appear.

“ The case of a ship called *Le Rodeur*, was brought to light under circumstances which place its truth beyond the shadow of a doubt. It appeared in a periodical work * published at Paris, and devoted to medical subjects; into which it was introduced, merely for the elucidation of some medical facts. The following is the translation of an extract from this work :—
‘ The ship *Le Rodeur*, Captain B ———, of two hundred tons burden, left Havre the 24th of January, 1819, for the coast of Africa, and reached her destination the 14th of March following, anchoring at Bonny in the river Calabar. The crew, consisting of twenty-two men, enjoyed good health during the outward voyage, and during their stay at Bonny, where they continued till the 6th April. They had observed no trace of ophthalmia among the natives; and it was not until fifteen days after they had set sail on the return voyage, and the vessel was near

* The title of this work is, “ *Bibliothèque Ophtalmologique, ou Recueil d’Observations sur les Maladies des Yeux, faites à la Clinique de l’Institution Royale des Jeunes Aveugles, par Mons. Guille, Directeur General et Médecin en Chef de l’Institution Royale des Jeunes Aveugles de Paris, &c.* ” “ Avec des Notes par MM. Depuytreu, Pariset, &c.”

the Equator, that they perceived the first symptoms of this frightful malady. It was then remarked, that the negroes, who, to the number of one hundred and sixty, were crowded together in the hold, and between the decks, had contracted a considerable redness of the eyes, which spread with singular rapidity. No great attention was at first paid to these symptoms, which were thought to be caused only by the want of air in the hold, and by the scarcity of water which had already begun to be felt. At this time they were limited to eight ounces of water a day for each person, which quantity was afterwards reduced to the half of a wine glass. By the advice of M. Maignan, the surgeon of the ship, the negroes, who had hitherto remained shut up in the hold, were brought upon deck in succession, in order that they might breathe a purer air. But it became necessary to abandon this expedient, salutary as it was, because many of those negroes, affected with nostalgia (*i. e.* a passionate desire to revisit their native land) threw themselves into the sea, locked in each other's arms.

“ ‘ The disease which had spread itself so rapidly and frightfully among the Africans, soon

began to infect all on board, and to create alarms for the crew. The danger of infection, and perhaps the cause which produced the disease, were increased by a violent dysentery, attributed to the use of rain-water. The first of the crew who caught the infection was a sailor who slept under the deck, near the grated hatch which communicated with the hold. The next day a landsman was seized with ophthalmia; and, in three days more, the captain and almost the whole of the crew were infected by it.'

" The means of cure which the surgeon employed are then detailed. They proved inefficient. 'The sufferings of the people,' the account goes on to state, 'and the number of the blind augmented every day; so that the crew, previously alarmed by the apprehension of a revolt* among the Negroes, were seized with the farther dread of not being able to make the West Indies, if the only sailor who had hitherto escaped the contagion, and on whom their whole

" * The apprehended revolt did not occur, because the Negroes, who had belonged to rival and hostile tribes, far from thinking to profit by their situation and their number to assert their liberty, continued to indulge their mutual hatred, even in chains, and were ready in their rage to tear each other in pieces."

hope rested, should become blind like the rest. This calamity had actually befallen the Leon, a Spanish vessel which the Rodeur met with on her passage, and the whole of whose crew, having become blind, were under the necessity of altogether abandoning the direction of their ship. They entreated the charitable interference of the Rodeur; but the seamen of this vessel could not either quit her to go on board the Leon, on account of the cargo of Negroes, nor receive the crew of the Leon on board the Rodeur, in which there was scarcely room for themselves. The difficulty of taking care of so large a number of sick in so confined a space, and the total want of fresh meat, and of medicines, made them envy the fate of those who were about to become the victims of a death which seemed to them inevitable, and the consternation was general.*

““The Rodeur reached Guadaloupe on the 21st of June 1819, her crew being in a most deplorable condition. Three days after her arrival, the only man who, during the voyage, had with-

“* The Leon has not been since heard of, and in all probability was lost.”

stood the influence of the contagion, and whom Providence appeared to have preserved as a guide to his unfortunate companions, was seized with the same malady. Of the negroes, thirty-nine had become perfectly blind, twelve had lost an eye, and fourteen were affected with blemishes more or less considerable. Of the crew, twelve lost their sight entirely, among whom was the surgeon; five became blind of one eye, one of them being the captain; and four were partially injured.' Of the captain it is added, that, 'he did not cease in the midst of the greatest danger, to lavish his attentions on the negroes and the sailors, with a zeal and devotedness which exceed all praise.'

“ Such is the account of the voyage of the *Rodeur*, as given in this work. The following additional circumstances connected with this transaction, though there omitted, probably because they illustrated no medical principle, have since been given to the public on very credible authority, and, having met with no contradiction, may be assumed to be correct. It is stated among other things, that the captain caused several of the Negroes who were prevented in the attempt to throw themselves overboard, to

be shot and hung, in the hope that the example might deter the rest from a similar conduct. But even this severity proved unavailing, and it became necessary to confine the slaves entirely to the hold during the remainder of the voyage. It is further stated, that upwards of thirty of the slaves who became blind were thrown into the sea and drowned, upon the principle that, had they been landed at Guadaloupe, no one would have bought them, and that the proprietors would consequently have incurred the expense of maintaining them without the chance of any return. While by throwing them overboard, not only was this certain loss avoided, but ground was also laid for a claim on the underwriters by whom the cargo had been insured ; and who are said to have allowed the claim, and made good the value of the slaves thus destroyed.

“ Another most important fact, resting on the same authority, is, that the *Rodeur*, having returned to Havre, was refitted by the same owners, and dispatched early in the last year on a second slave-voyage ; and that the command of her has been given to the same captain who had her in charge on the former voyage.

“ The case of the *Rodeur*, it will be seen, ex-

emplifies many of the horrors of the middle passage. It furnishes likewise a striking proof of the impunity, with which the most open contraventions of the abolition laws have been committed in France. The facts of the case must have been well known in Guadaloupe, where the slaves that remained alive are stated to have been sold. The case has also acquired great notoriety in France by means of the above publication, and also of a petition addressed to the Chamber of Deputies in June, 1820, by M. Morenas, in which many of the above facts were detailed."

" On the 4th of March, 1820, after a long chase, a vessel was boarded by the boats of his majesty's ship *Tartar*, commanded by Sir George Collier, which proved to be *La Jeune Estelle*, of Martinique, M. ———, master. On being boarded, he declared that he had been plundered of his slaves, and that none remained on board. His agitation and alarm however excited suspicion, and led to an examination of the vessel's hold. During this examination, a sailor who struck a cask, which was tightly closed up, heard a faint voice issue from it, as of a creature expiring. The cask was immediately opened,

when two girls of about twelve or fourteen years of age, in the last stage of suffocation, were found to be inclosed in it, and by this providential interposition were probably rescued from a miserable death.

“ These girls, when brought on the deck of the Tartar, were recognised by a person on board, who had been taken prisoner in another slave-ship, as having been the property of the captain of a schooner belonging to New York. An investigation having taken place, it appeared that this American contrabandist had died at a place on the coast called Trade Town, leaving behind him fourteen slaves, of whom these two girls formed a part ; and that after his death the master of the vessel had landed his crew, armed with swords and pistols, and carried these fourteen slaves on board the *Jeune Estelle*. Sir George Collier, conceiving that the other twelve slaves, who had been procured by this piratical act, might still be secreted in that vessel, ordered a fresh search. The result was, that a Negro man, not however one of the twelve, was rescued from death. A platform of loose boards had been raised on the water-casks of the vessel, so as to form an *entre-pont*, or between-decks, of

twenty-three inches in height, which was the only space allotted for the accommodation of this unfortunate cargo of human beings, whom M. ——— intended to procure and carry from the coast. Beneath this platform, one of the boards resting on his body, jammed between two water-casks, appeared the above wretched individual, whom it was a matter of astonishment to find alive. Sir George Collier was inclined to remove him on board the Tartar, as he had done the two girls : but M. ——— having proved that the poor African had been bought by him for eight dollars worth of brandy and iron, Sir George did not feel himself authorised to do so ; although, had the vessel been capable of beating up to Senegal, he would have sent her thither for judgment, as he had done the two former ships.

“ With respect to the other twelve slaves taken by force from Trade Town, no distinct information could be obtained beyond the assertion of M. ———, that he had been plundered of them by a Spanish pirate. But it was recollected with horror by the officers of the Tartar, that when they first began the chase of *La Jeune Estelle*, they had seen several casks floating past

them, in which they now suspected that these wretched beings might have been enclosed, having been thrown overboard by this man to elude the detection of his piratical proceedings. It was now impossible, however, to ascertain the fact, as the chase had led them many leagues to leeward ; and, even after they had consumed the time which would have been necessary, by beating to windward, to reach the place where the chase commenced, there were many chances against their again seeing the casks, and not the slightest probability that any of the slaves inclosed in them, if they were so inclosed, would be found still alive." — *Fifteenth Report of the African Institution.*

AN APOCRYPHAL CHAPTER IN THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND;

BEING

A TRUE AND PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF WHAT
DID NOT HAPPEN IN THIS UNITED KINGDOM IN
THE YEAR 18**—18**.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a gossip's story in a work of one of our old poets *, concerning a storm of rain in a certain island, which drove every body mad on whom a drop of the unholy water fell; when the pranks which these unfortunate people committed under the inspiration of that insanity, so much resembled the extravagancies of reasonable beings, that the whole might be regarded as a satirical pic-

* Drayton's Moon Calf.

ture of the age in which the author lived. Now it is not intended that there should be a word of satire in the following authentic history of a period not to be found in the annals of any nation, but which, if it had occurred, would, undoubtedly, have produced events (perhaps not these identical ones), of the same character with those which shall be forthwith faithfully recorded. Should the scrupulous reader question this disavowal of every purpose, either invidious or insidious, the author can most positively assure him, that it is as true as any thing else in this chapter. It is moreover to be hoped, that this impartial exhibition of unrealities will not be without benefit to those who consider the subject duly; for then this figurative exemplification of some of the fearful issues that might be expected, were the beneficent influence of the Gospel entirely suspended among us, cannot fail to impress the mind with a grateful sense of the blessings accruing from it. The measure of that influence (though unhappily not so predominant as

the antagonist principle,) is little suspected by superficial observers; but it cannot be denied by those who look closely into the agency of great causes, that the sanctions of religion not only operate directly on the hearts of true believers, but indirectly affect all the institutions of civil government, and silently regulate the courtesies of private life. There lives not the man, woman, or child in this kingdom, capable of distinguishing between good and evil, who is not, more or less, whether knowingly or not, under the control of Christian principles acting upon his hopes, his fears, or his good sense, as a member of the community.

SECTION I.

An unparalleled Prodigy takes place.

ONE beautiful sabbath-morning, in the month of June 18**, the bells of ten thousand parish churches, from Berwick-on-Tweed to Penzance, were ringing for divine

service ; and the doors of innumerable meeting houses were quietly standing open to receive their respective audiences ; while the children of as many Sunday schools as both put together were conning their lessons from the words of eternal life. The guardian angels of our isle, from their various stations, beheld, with a joy which heavenly intelligences alone can feel, the myriads of those who worship God in spirit and in truth, repairing from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, on public highways, through meadows and corn-fields, in crowded streets, along solitary lanes, by the side of rivers, across moor-lands and mountains, to their houses of prayer in villages, market towns, and populous cities ; while with *them* went the multitude of those who observe the forms of devotion and frequent the temple because their fathers did so before them, and it is proper that their children should do so after them, without feeling for themselves either the duty or the privilege of holding communion with the Father of Spirits. We

notice not here the far greater number of those to whom the sabbath was no day of rest either from labour or from sinning. “Tears, such as angels weep,” most probably were shed over both the latter classes by the compassionate beings who were rejoicing over the former; and it may be presumed that they were also earnestly praying, as angels pray, that formalists and hypocrites might be converted and healed, as well as that sinners might be turned from the error of their way.

Meanwhile it was a spectacle which made the light of that seventh day as the light of seven, to all, whether angels or men, who, witnessing it, could estimate the effects throughout the ensuing week, and thence running into the depths of eternity, of the sabbath’s occupations upon those who were rightly engaged in them, — thus to behold the tribes of the Lord going up to worship in the beauty of holiness, though they bore sundry denominations, and were passing in different directions, meeting, crossing, accompanying,

leaving each other, as the roads to their peculiar sanctuaries associated or parted them by the way; — while all were equally acceptable to Him who is no respecter of persons, and all equally walking with Him who is at once in every place. His eye, seeing things as they are, not as they seem to man, could perceive that these pilgrims from the city of destruction were consentaneously journeying on the narrow way that leadeth unto life, as the planets pursue their revolutions with unswerving decision, though, contemplated from the earth, they appear sometimes to advance and sometimes to recede; here in conjunction and there in opposition, with reference to each other.

It is, happily, not incumbent on him who opens parables or utters dark sayings, to account philosophically for the marvellous circumstances that frequently compose the burthen of his narrative; for, as the truth of these lies in the application, not in the substance, it is sufficient if they be rendered capable of illustrating things that *are* by

things that *are not*. On this ground there will be no difficulty in obtaining credence from the liberal and sagacious reader to the strange event about to be disclosed, the like of which assuredly never did happen since the world began, and it is to be hoped never will happen till the world shall have an end. — On the morning above-mentioned, of all the numberless congregations which arrived at their particular churches and chapels, there were none that could enter the same. The walls of every building were as impervious as if the whole had been solid rock, so that they wearied themselves to find the doors. What had befallen the places, or what had befallen the people it is in vain to conjecture; every sanctuary was hermetically sealed to the multitudes that thronged around; for the sudden and unaccountably impregnable fortification of these temples, formerly not less free of access to all classes of hearers than to the air and the sunshine, drew the profane as well as the pious, in every instance, to the spot, it being a great recommendation with the

former to go to church, because they could not get in. These sieges, from one end of the kingdom to the other, having been carried on till it was proved to be utterly impossible to penetrate the outworks either with hands or keys, the crowds in all places gradually dispersed; the good went home to weep, the thoughtless to wonder, and the irreverent to scoff, at what had happened. Why force was not attempted, and whether, if it had been, it would have succeeded, this history saith not. Every body acquiesced in the supernatural debarment with the same kind of listlessness, as in dreams the mind passively acquiesces in whatever occurs; for prodigies and transformations being the natural order of things in those mockeries of life, excite no surprize that leads to suspicion of their reality, however they may confound, distress, or terrify the sleeper, to whom, at the time, they are as actual as they are imaginary. If, then, the reader can submit to lend his belief to this first impossibility in the veritable record before him, he will not

find his credulity much imposed upon by any thing in the sequel. Let him, therefore, proceed, though with reverence, to imagine a scene like the following, for it would be too hazardous, in the chronicles of this disordered period, to affirm that any thing so awful or afflicting had literally taken place; and yet, judging by consequences, this sketch may be regarded as an illustration of what must have been the trials of true Christians in a crisis so inexplicably perplexing. One example will be enough under this head.

SECTION II.

The Righteous forsaken.

WHEN the good man reached his home, he collected his children and his household round the altar which had long been consecrated to the God of his fathers, at his own fire-side. But here again *Ichabod* was written upon the walls; the glory had departed from his house, as well as from the temple.

The Bible, which he was wont to read daily, and consult as containing the oracles of truth, became a sealed book in his hands, which no mortal strength could unlock; and though, “like him who saw the Apocalypse,” he wept much that no man was found worthy to open it, or to look thereon, it remained inextricable as in the grasp of death, and closed like the grave. Trembling and astonished, he hurried into his chamber to pour out his soul in prayer alone; but his heart failed like Nabal’s, — it died within him. The words mocked his lips; he uttered what he meant not. He wandered forth into the fields: the heavens were brass above his head; his sighs could not penetrate them: the earth under his feet resembled the sand of the wilderness; it drank his tears that flowed in torrents, and yet it remained as dry as before. Confounded and disconsolate, he returned to the bosom of his family; they were all in like tribulation, dismayed, bewildered, lost; they looked one at another; they gazed through the window upon the landscape, and darted a glance

into the sky, as if they doubted whether they had ever heard, or seen, or felt, aught of the goodness and power of Him who doeth what He will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. The trial was too hard for flesh and blood. The Spirit of God seemed to be withdrawn from his people, or the smallest measure of it only left to preserve them from despair and madness. They were indeed cast down, but not destroyed; they kept the shield of faith, though the sword of the word had been taken out of their hand, while they appeared given up, like Job, to be tempted, afflicted, and buffeted by Satan. The hand trembles while it writes down these sentences, as if it were promulgating things which it is not lawful for a man to utter; and the reader with a tender conscience may feel as the pilgrim did in the valley of the shadow of death, when flitting fiends, amidst the darkness, whispered blasphemies in his ear which so troubled his senses, that he thought they were suggestions of his own mind, and ejaculations of his own

lips. It should be so; — both writer and reader ought to shudder here, and, pausing, ask — if the bare idea of such a bereavement be so fearful, what would be the calamity itself, were the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, in very deed to take his ordinances, his word, and his Spirit away from us? If, in such a case, the righteous could scarcely be saved, where would the ungodly and the sinner stand?

SECTION III.

Sinners left to their own Way.

MORE frightful in effect, though less revolting to ordinary feelings, (because the spectacle of the wicked running headlong to destruction, is a million times more familiar, not to imagination only, but to experience, than the hypothesis of the righteous being forsaken,) will be the details of what befel the careless, the profligate, and the proud, in this kingdom; while, for twelve slow months,

the slighted but not wholly ineffectual influence of Christianity, was suspended with regard to them, and during all that time neither warning, instruction, nor promise, was sent by ministers of the gospel; but, being given up to a reprobate mind, God was not in all their thoughts.

About the middle of the last century there lived, or, in the language of chronology, there *flourished* a man in this country, who was perfectly convinced that his soul had been annihilated; and though on other subjects he was as rational as his neighbours, on this he was so deplorably deranged, that nothing could persuade him of his mistake. Such an hallucination then had seized the people of England at this crisis, on every question touching religion; they had a confused recollection that there once existed something called Christianity among them, but all that they now knew of it was, that they knew nothing. This being premised, what follows will not only be probable, but,

in such a derangement of society, must have been inevitable.

The thousands and tens of thousands of good sort of folks, who were accustomed to spend a reasonable number of hours every Sunday within the walls of a place of worship, which helped them off (though rather heavily and mechanically) with just so much of their time, were, at first, put exceedingly out of their way, from having so large a quantity of an unimproveable capital of the most precious commodity thrown upon their hands. Even before this catastrophe, they had often been at their wit's end to devise means of spending, though to waste, that portion of their income in it which fell between the services, and was not occupied by meals; having no other resources than the Sabbath-dissipation of yawning at home, or strolling abroad. These, however, were gradually reconciled to the remittance of what had always been rather a penance than a pleasure, and was encountered not merely for decency's sake, but to appease an occa-

sional disquietude of thought, which would intrude upon the cares and enjoyments of work-day life, to remind them that the world was passing away, and that they were doing the same more quickly than the world, which had already outlasted hundreds of generations of occupants like themselves, and might yet wear out hundreds more, whose maxim, like their own, would be, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

The notoriously vicious—the swearer, the drunkard, the extortioner, the gambler, the spendthrift, the miser, and the debauchee,—were transported with the welcome intelligence that there was to be no more religion in the world, and consequently that heaven and hell (it was difficult to say which they dreaded most) being both abolished, they might now wallow with an impunity which they had never known before, in every excess of appetite and passion. Heretofore, in their wildest delirium, their deepest abstraction, their most captivating beguilement, in that limbo of vanity which they inhabited,

the secret terrors of conscience, the furies of remorse, and, more hated than either, the warnings of mercy, were wont to break in upon their riot or their peace, and turn their fool's paradise into a purgatory,—where they were made to pass, in naked spirit, through flames that would neither purify nor consume, but which gave terrible earnest to flesh and blood of the fire that cannot be quenched, and the blackness of darkness for ever. Thither indeed, by their own sentence, pronounced in horrid imprecations upon themselves, or in wanton defiance of Almighty wrath and vengeance that spared them still, and still delayed to strike, they had been often consigned; but though they braved the judgment, they writhed under the antepast. The degree in which the most desperate transgressors are held in awe by the resisted evidence of the truth, which condemns them, is far beyond what others, unaccustomed to stand in the way of sinners, can readily believe, and is what the latter are unwilling to acknowledge even to themselves; — to the

world, of course, they would boldly deny it, from very cowardice. The power that suspends the avalanche by a film more subtle than gossamer is not estimated, till it leaves the devastating mass to fall; the restraint of Him who “holdeth the winds in His fist,” is not perceived, till “He quits his grasp, and gives them all their fury.” Oh! what would Britain be, if but for a day the wicked were abandoned without controul from law, conscience, or Providence, to do what they would for the annoyance of their neighbours and their own destruction!

SECTION IV.

The Consolations and Fears of Sceptics.

BUT it was among infidels, who were wiser in their own esteem than the Author of the universe, that the chief triumph was expressed. “The grand secret” at length was found out, on this side of the grave; and they said in their hearts what the fool hath

said in his ; nay, they strove to believe what they said, and no small number among the more mercurial, professed to have actually succeeded in the attempt to impose on their own credulity, — a feat, which they were sincerely of opinion nobody else could have done for them. However, as on the whole it was more comfortable and more creditable to believe that there might be a God and a future state, the graver sort of sceptics first made their own Creator (so much like themselves that each might have been his own God,) and then roundly affirmed that He had made them, and left them to be as happy or as miserable as they pleased, or as they could not help, — for there were both free-willers and fatalists among them. With regard to the next world, they provided a future state equally according to their own mind, in which their imaginary deity would not hurt any body, except (as a few contended, though the majority protested against such inhumanity) with a little salutary discipline, which would fit the subjects of it for

everlasting felicity. To establish this, it was shrewdly argued, that as virtue is its own reward, so vice is its own corrective; and that most people punish themselves sufficiently here for their errors, follies, and sins, — if indeed there be such things as the latter, of which, by the way, no body could convince either himself or his neighbour. The existence of sin, therefore, was held to be the most doubtful point of moral speculation, and, like the materiality or immateriality of matter, capable of every proof on either side, except demonstration.

These were the more refined and erudite of unbelievers; but the vulgar very naturally concluded, that, since the age of reason was come at last, every body had a right to make as great a fool of himself as he pleased, at his own expence, and as great a knave as might be convenient, at the expence of his neighbour. These then preferred to “lead an atheist life” as the least trouble, being freest from restraint, and compatible with the greatest liberty of speech and action,

both with respect to private character, private property, and a meditated reformation of the state on agrarian principles. Nor was it long before the former class were sagacious enough to discover, that some inconvenience might arise from the abandonment of old superstitions; scepticism being a religion fit only for gentlemen and scholars, who know how to be such “Gods” as the serpent told Eve that she and her husband should become, if they ate of the forbidden fruit, — distinguishing good and evil, and practising the one or the other with a moderation, not only to suit their passions and interests, but consistent also with such a degree of order and decorum in society as might enable them to talk about virtue, honour, and the dignity of human nature, while they domineered over the multitude with the most tyrannous hypocrisy. On the other hand, they perceived, that if the herd were thus to “know good and evil,” yet, for lack of learning, rank, or even wealth, (all of which wonderfully “open the eyes,” in the subtlest sense of the

serpent's words,) they would be incapable of distinguishing them properly, and preserving a due equilibrium in the discreet exercise of both, as their betters did ; consequently they would choose evil as more promising of immediate advantage, and would follow it with an avidity which no human laws could restrain, to the peril and destruction of life or property, wherever these lay, either as snares or obstacles, in their path towards the indulgence of their brute appetites.

So alarmingly impressed with the danger that might ensue to the commonwealth, from the rejection of all creeds whatever by the rabble, were several of these sages, who had all their lives been labouring to pull down the edifice of Christianity, and to "crush the wretch," as they contemptuously designated the Redeemer of the world, — that they actually entered into a conspiracy to re-enthroned Him as the object of worship for the common people. A few, more hardy or more fearful of "radical reform" than the rest, went so far as to begin in market-places,

town-halls, and (on Oratorio evenings) at the theatres, to preach the faith which formerly they persecuted; but never having known much of the matter, and in the late confusion of minds on the subject of religion having forgotten the little they once knew, they driven so exquisitely as to provoke at once the scorn and wrath of the multitude, who presently silenced them with such missiles as were wont to be thrown away on better men, in the days of Whitfield and Wesley. These false prophets, however, not being so devoted to a ruined cause, (which in their hearts they abhorred,) as to aspire to martyrdom for it, prudently determined to leave the nation to its fate, under the judgment which had fallen upon it, and most probably had been brought down by their own impiety.

SECTION V.

Meteorological Observations.

FOR twelve months while this interregnum of religion continued, the prince of the power

of the air exercised his capricious dominion, not only in the hearts of the children of disobedience, but over the elements themselves. It was forgotten to be remarked, that, glorious as had been the morning of the Sabbath whence this era began, when the temples were closed and the Scriptures were bound fast as with bars of iron, — no sooner had those portentous phenomena taken place, than the atmosphere became obscured with a lethargic fog, which oppressed the spirits, while it confounded the sight of the inhabitants of the land, so that thenceforward to the end of the term there never was another perfectly clear day. A beamless watery orb at brightest appeared the sun, and sometimes his image was tripled in the wilderness of haze, through which he daily journeyed; the moon, through all her phases, was turned into blood; the constellations, blasted and wan, looked sickly from their spheres, while the stars were so intermingled with meteors, which night after night held their places among them, and then flashing suddenly

away were succeeded by others, — that the configurations of the celestial bodies were no longer distinguishable, the calculations of astronomers were disturbed, (but if astronomy failed, astrology revived,) and the earth seemed so far removed from its propriety as to present a new face of the heavens, such as one might imagine would be seen from a planet revolving round the Dog-star. Nor is it quite certain that the latter was not really the case; the frenzy of the times being certainly in favour of such a derangement as the temporary transportation of this world into another system; but no copy of “*Vox Stellarum*, by Francis Moore, Physician,” for the year 18**—18**, having been preserved, the fact must remain in nearly as much mystery as if we had had his explanation of it.

SECTION VI.

Ecclesiastical Matters.

PROCEED we now to report some of the special effects of this new dispensation of evil.

The officers of religion, whether churchmen or dissenters, all holding sinecures, from the inaccessible state of their respective places of worship, found it difficult to obtain the means of subsistence. Actions and distresses for the recovery of tithes and dues, were all that were left of the functions of the beneficed clergy ; and these were more than they could perform with satisfaction to themselves or their parishioners. The stipendiary curates, being wholly without employment, were reduced to the necessity of exercising the humblest occupations that were honest, to procure bread for their families : ministers of other denominations were thrown upon their private resources, or the voluntary munificence of their congregations ; and during a time of rebuke and blasphemy, there is no reason to presume that they fared any better than their elders of the establishment.

As no registers were kept, no bill of mortality for the period can be given here. Marriages were not solemnised at the altar, but ratified before magistrates ; and con-

sisted simply in the parties being bound over to keep the peace towards each other; their recognizances were filed at the quarter sessions, and if tradition be not slander, they were frequently estreated. The Dunmow flitch of bacon was not claimed in a single instance, on any one of the three hundred and sixty five days of this intercalary year. Divorces were frequent: — the more orderly ones were effected before a bench of justices, by the payment of proper fees to clerks, constables, and the town-crier, by the latter of whom they were duly proclaimed in his rounds: but the more popular and less expensive form (occasionally employed in better times) was usually preferred, — the ladies being led in halters, by their lords, to the market-cross, were disposed of in general either *for* a groat or *with* a groat; the seller as often giving a premium as the buyer paying a price.

But the most extraordinary of these *memorabilia* is the fact, which nevertheless may be proved on oath by every intelligent reader,

namely, that there was neither a birth nor a death from beginning to end of this marvellous year. How to reconcile this with what must be presumed to be no less true, — the execution of criminals, mentioned in a subsequent section of this history, — the writer knows not: but his only business being to set down, upon unquestionable authority, what did *not* happen, he may safely leave to the sagacity of future commentators the task which peculiarly belongs to them — to solve this and every other contradiction, that may be found in these authentic pages. That the church-yards were occasionally visited, and work of some kind performed there, is quite certain from the circumstance, that in most of them monuments in honour of the dead (of some age or other) were raised, bearing such inscriptions as the following:— “Death is eternal sleep;” — “There is neither resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit;” with others equally pious and consolatory.

SECTION VII.

Sabbath Occupations.

FOR the first two months people of all ranks were grievously embarrassed about the Sabbath. It could not be hallowed according to the obsolete forms, and yet even the decently irreligious were ashamed to profane it openly. It seemed to be rather a day interpolated in the week, than one of which they had forgotten the right use; so that many conscientious formalists secretly wished that it could be altogether expunged from the calendar, and that time would take a clear leap over the space between Saturday night and Monday morning. But, as bluff Dr. Johnson once said to a young statesman, who modestly expressed a doubt of being able to maintain his integrity amidst the snares and temptations of office, — “O, Sir, you will soon learn to be a very pretty rascal;” — so these over-righteous ones soon learned to be very

pretty sabbath-breakers ; and Sunday, till the end of the term, became the merriest day of the seven, so that its return was more anxiously expected than had ever been the case in their fathers' time or their own.

As bread was cheap, and employment not very abundant, the poor did not choose to sacrifice their holiday ; moreover, being under no restraint from methodistical prejudices, they abandoned themselves to dissipation and all manner of idle exercises. The market price of bears, bulls, and badgers, rose every week ; the demand for these unhappy animals increasing in proportion as the rage for baiting them became both more vulgar and more fashionable, high and low being driven by necessity to associate on the common ground of blackguard amusement. Cock-fighting and cock-throwing, in like manner, doubled and tripled from month to month the value of eggs and chickens, that the gallant birds might be bred in numbers equal to the consumption. Then there were boxing, running, wrestling, and grinning

matches ; with a revival of all kinds of heroic games, including drinking, dicing, and other nameless excesses, which literally raised from the dead the old English spirit that distinguished the peasantry (when they were called “ knaves ” and “ villains,” and deserved those names, for degrading them from their honest meaning,) under the petty tyranny of the barons ; — a spirit which made England the terror of France and of herself too, in the reigns of the Edwards and Henries, and during the wars of York and Lancaster. It may be remembered that the decay of this spirit was most worthily lamented in the British senate some years ago, when the amiable and illustrious statesman to whom Dr. Johnson is said to have uttered the above quoted oracle so laughed humanity out of countenance, that for a long time she was afraid of showing her face within the doors of parliament, and would rather have stood in the pillory than at the bar of either house to plead for chimney-sweepers’ boys and brute beasts ; though the latter, to this day, are

used only *less* cruelly than the former, by ruffians more debased than either. Yet it cannot be forgotten that this same humanity, within the same walls, in spite of the same scorn from honourables and right honourables, carried the cause of the negro through both houses, after a struggle twice the length of the siege of Troy, in which more than the might of Hector and Achilles contended for the living carcass of the slave, as the Greeks and Trojans over the dead body of Patroclus.

The discontinuance of religious ordinances necessarily broke up Sunday-schools, and dissolved all National, Lancasterian, and charitable institutions, in which the children of the poor are taught to become good servants, good neighbours and good subjects. Here-upon some hundreds of thousands of naughty boys and girls were turned loose upon one another and upon the community; the plague of which was more particularly felt on the Sabbath days, — when neither the frogs, the flies, nor the locusts of Egypt were more pestilent in their day and generation, than

were these young fry. They crowded the streets of large towns, taunting and insulting the passengers, and annoying all quiet people, either within doors or without, — if peradventure any quiet people were to be found, — who could be disturbed rather than delighted, with impudence and riot. In the country, the lanes, fields, and woods were overrun with the little vagabonds, who were as wanton and mischievous, in their way, as hares and foxes in preserved covers, where it is as much as a farmer's living, if not his life, is worth, to touch one of the vermin, though they are devouring his crops and robbing his hen-roosts before his eyes. As those synagogues of Satan, — taverns, gaming-houses, and brothels were thronged on the Sabbath to suffocation, by their elders; so the out-of-door Sunday-schools of the same indefatigable master were frequented by the juvenile multitude, who had formerly, within consecrated walls, been learning to read the Scriptures. Now, however, in straggling bands or large companies, they were rehearsing all manner

of wickedness in word or deed; thus, by a due course of education in vice, preparing themselves for the perilous pleasures of a life that would lead to the gallows, and whatever lies beyond the gallows for those who die impenitent there. Broken hedges, trampled harvests, orchards robbed, and numberless petty depredations, proved what apt scholars neglected children are in lessons that need no teaching. These petty enormities showed, likewise, what trusty apprentices and virtuous housemaids would be at any body's service who durst employ them, if (as some persons, wiser in their own conceit than seven men that can render a reason, recommend) the children of the lower classes in this Christian country were left to grow up in that latitudinarian ignorance, which would variously qualify them, according to the bent of their genius, and as opportunity favoured them, to be pimps, parasites, and lacqueys among the great; — to supply the streets of the metropolis with a due succession of prostitutes and pick-pockets; — to recruit the army

and navy with prime desperadoes from the quarter sessions ; — to commit burglaries, highway robberies, and now and then a murder, for the purpose of keeping the police on the alert, and furnishing high-seasoned paragraphs for the newspapers ; — to people work-houses with idlers, the public-roads with vagrants, and the prisons with criminals unfit for any society, and least of all for their own ; — to feed the gallows with its annual quota of human victims ; — and to carry into barbarian lands the vices of civilized society, and, supplanting the aborigines of New Holland (as stupid as if they had but lately risen with their half-formed soil out of the slime of the ocean,) to colonize its wildernesses with incorrigible outcasts from Europe ; and thus lay the foundations of future kingdoms and commonwealths in the east, when time shall have brought the march of empire round to that quarter again.

SECTION VIII.

What was not done by Christian Philanthropists.

As the Scriptures were obsolete, and religion at home remained in a state of suspended animation, those noble revenues of voluntary taxation raised for the maintenance of Christian and benevolent institutions, were wholly withheld. The anniversaries of Bible, Missionary, School, and other societies, returned in the progress of the sun through the zodiac ; but the very recollection of such festivals had passed away, and all the works of charity connected with them were at a dead stand. There were indeed persons who had confused notions of many things which they were accustomed to do, but which now they did not, nor could do if they would. On these points their feelings were much akin to those of hypochondriacs, who imagine themselves to be china jars or glass bottles ; and though clear in their faculties in

every respect beside, are morbidly conscious of degradation and frailty in this, while they feel utterly incapable of making an effort to escape the spell.

In every quarter of the globe, and in almost every savage clime, the paralyzing effect of this extinction of Christian zeal was experienced. Good men who had left their homes and connections to carry the Gospel to the uttermost isles, looked in vain, in the season, for the ships that were wont to bring them glad tidings from the far country of their birth. “Hope deferred” made many a “heart sick ;” for “the desire,” which when it cometh is a “tree of life,” came not. There may be some well-dressed, and well-read ladies and gentlemen in this land of Bibles, who have heard of the institutions particularly alluded to, and who, in their wisdom, — which consists sometimes in an indolent, but oftener in a resolute, ignorance of the subject, — may think that the money *not* exported in this year of infidelity, for such purposes, must have been a vast saving

to the nation, since of course it was expended at home in the laudable encouragement of British industry, and recompensing native talent in literature, arts, and manufactures! Others, however, who happen to know a little more of the nature of this commerce, and its effects in civilizing (as well as christianizing) barbarians, by introducing among them the habits and wants of a superior race of beings, will know that the main hope of the future extension of British power, British wealth, and British influence, abroad, rests upon the progress and permanence of this sacred intercourse with all parts of the world.

SECTION IX.

The Administration of Justice.

THERE may be a thousand anomalies and imperfections in our criminal laws; but in the administration of them, when life is at issue, there is a tenderness towards the accused, and a fear of condemning, except upon irre-

sistible evidence of guilt, which has never been elsewhere exemplified in an equal degree in the history of human jurisprudence. Whatever learning and philosophy may have done towards enlarging the minds and humanising the manners of our countrymen, this merciful disposition in favour of those whom natural instinct prejudices by their very looks, must be principally ascribed to the influence of that religion which is “part and parcel of the law of England.” This influence, whether recognised or not, is the true secret of all good conduct among private individuals, and all good government among persons under authority, so far at least as these good things are more predominant in Great Britain than they were in Greece and Rome, when, amidst the glory of literature and arms, judicial tyranny was exercised, corruption prevailed, and vices were countenanced which are not named among Christians, or named only to excite abhorrence and execration.

In the period which our chronicle commemorates, this bias to rectitude being disturbed,

the laws of the realm were executed with no more scrupulous attention to justice than was perfectly convenient to the judges, or absolutely necessary to preserve the appearance of it before the multitude; that is, to secure their eyes with a bandage, and keep them as blind as Justice herself is represented to be by painters, when she has rather need of second sight in addition to natural, to enable her to distinguish between right and wrong, not only while they lie in her balance, but in their issues when they have passed out of her hands. Nor was the multitude averse from being thus hoodwinked; for, in consequence of the removal of that yoke which the crudest notions concerning “a judgment to come” impose on the most stiff-necked conscience, — they had then no better ideas of equity than they have now occasionally, when, on some insane pretence, they are exercising the sovereignty of the people in *propria personâ* by breaking windows, destroying property, and assaulting lives, under the impulse of that legion-fiend, which, possessing thousands at

once, renders a mob the most fearless and ferocious of monsters, though every individual composing it be a coward who would fly from the face of a child, if detected in attempting alone, what he does in defiance of death on the spot, in company with others. At this time (if ever) it might be said with truth of

——— “ that most venerable place
Where angry Justice shows her awful face, —
There little villains must submit to fate,
That great ones may enjoy the world in state.”

GARTH'S *Dispensary*.

And of the decision of trials in which the legal felony of a hasty verdict was deemed a mere venial error, it might (if ever) be literally avowed, that

——— “ wretches hang that jurymen may dine.”

When the education of the poor was exploded ; when the most merciful punishment for their crimes was a merciless adherence to the letter of the statute, and nothing relenting was allowed about a court of law except

with regard to the integrity of evidence, on which abundant laxity was observed, — thanks to that test of truth, cross-examination ; when oaths were administered not less frequently than before, though the form of words (faithfully preserved as a concatenation of sounds), was no more intelligible than *abracadabra* ; yet, to give the swearers their due, they used them with quite as much reverence and sincerity as thousands do in our day who perfectly understand their meaning ; — at such a time, it may be taken for granted that prison-discipline was little heeded, and that neither schools, classification, divine service, nor tread-mills, were known within those pest-houses of wickedness, which if a man entered free from contagion, it were a thousand to one, whether he could leave without deserving to be kept there for life, or only discharged at the new drop.

Even to the condemned and the dying the good offices of the priest were discontinued ; and the periodical tragedies performed on the stage under the gallows, by his majesty's

servants, were such cold-blooded, mechanical slaughtering sights, that they were considered among the dullest entertainments of the day. No horror at the crime, no sympathy for the sufferer being excited, the Old Bailey was so unfashionable a resort on a black morning, that the very pick-pockets ceased to attend the exit of their most renowned fellow-labourers; curiosity (the necessity of making use of their eyes and mouths for something) in general drew none but a few slatternly women and their ragged children to the spot, — there to con a lesson of life, and learn to die game. Certain it is, that during this twelve months of apathy, the heart of no susceptible youth was so affected by the solemnities of an execution, — the prayers, the tears, the tolling-bell, the psalm, the agony and rapture of a launch into eternity, in the presence, and amidst the sobs of thousands; — the heart of no susceptible youth was so affected by these, as to be tempted to commit a capital offence, that he might have the happiness of appearing as the principal character in a scene of such

transporting interest, — a frenzy, which once grew so infectious in a northern kingdom (Denmark, it is believed,) that it became necessary for the public peace to deny the victims of the law the consolations of religion in their last moments.

No reports of cases adjudged in the courts of king's bench, common pleas, and exchequer of this period, have been preserved. As for chancery, not a judgment was given; nay, not a cause was advanced there a single step, though the pleadings were as long, as learned, and as lucid as ever. On one occasion, indeed, his lordship came to a decision, — but it was a decision to do nothing, after a stupendous hearing, in a dispute about copy-right. A book, suspected to be a very wicked one, being published in a splendid quarto for the sole edification of the privileged orders, — a wily villain of the trade, who would not have committed a highway robbery, shrewdly suspecting, that profligate as the times were, its morality would not bear the scrutiny of a British jury, boldly pounced upon his neighbour's

property, and issued a duodecimo edition for the benefit of the blackguard part of his majesty's subjects, at a price so abominably plebeian, that the meretricious volume became as much the manual of "the swinish multitude" in the filthiest styres of St. Giles's, as it had been of the polite world in the most fashionable drawing-rooms about St. James's. The injured party applied to the chancellor for an injunction, and the case was most ably argued against the pirate of literature; the "learned friends" to whom it had been entrusted, retracing the whole history of writing and printing from the hieroglyphics of Egypt to the invention of stereotype, and the last improvement of the Stanhope press. The defendant conducted his own cause, and signally falsified the cunning adage of the profession, that "he who is counsel for himself has a fool for his client." He denied at once the power of his lordship, sitting in equity, to interfere with a case of robbery committed beyond the limits of the law itself. He contended, and in the sequel he proved

(at least to the satisfaction of himself and his lordship,) that the work was wholly unworthy of the protection of the court; that its tendency was immoral in the highest degree; that its language and sentiments were grossly licentious; and that the object of the author was, not only to ridicule our incomparable establishment in church and state, but to hold up to scorn and laughter every thing the most sacred, virtuous, and honourable in human nature. It is said, that from the length and weariness of the previous pleadings, the chancellor's wig had fallen into such dreary dishevelment, that it hung,

“ With snowy locks adowne his shoulders shed,
As hoary frost with spangles doth attire
The mossy branches of an oak half dead.”

SPENSER.

But when his lordship heard the audacious defence, such horror seized this most sensitive of wigs, that it crept into curl again of its own accord, and became as stiff and stony as if it had lain seven years in the petrifying

well at Knaresborough. As this is the only preternatural event in the whole compass of the present history (always excepting the history itself,) the reader is not required to give credence to any thing so prodigious unless better authority than mere hearsay could be produced in support of it. Be this as it may, nobody has a right to doubt the following record of the issue:—his lordship having heard both sides, and taken from the midnight of the full moon to the last second of the last quarter of the same to make up his mind, pronounced judgment in the following memorable words:—“I refuse the injunction; and, being perfectly certain that no court of law will grant the plaintiff redress, I strenuously advise him to seek it in whichever he pleases forthwith.” The difference between this decision, and the equitable usage of the court under the reign of Astrea among us, shows the precise difference between that crazy era and our own.

SECTION X.

*Whether Honesty was deemed the best Policy,
or not.*

TRADE and commerce, during this insane period, were carried on very faithfully, according to the good old principle, expounded by the mountebank in St. Augustine, when he told his audience what was in every man's heart, — “buy as cheap, and sell as dear as you can.” As few qualms of conscience interfered in transactions when advantage could be taken of ignorance, imbecility, or distress, in the observance of this profitable maxim, hundreds grew much richer, and thousands much poorer than they would have been, had the Christian precept, “do unto others, as ye would that they should do unto you,” been heard, in a still, small voice, amidst the bustle of business, and the cares of the counting-house. Relief from any misgiving on this score, whatever might be the success of their speculations, emboldened mercantile adventurers to obtain all the credit they could, and

hazard the property of their confiding neighbours, or strangers, to all the winds of heaven, and all the waves of ocean, for the chance of a prosperous return, at the peril of the loss of every thing. Against the iniquity of this species of unproscribed robbery, there was no counter-action, except that of “diamond cut diamond;” and in the eagerness of all to get as much as they might, — honestly, if expedient, but at any rate to get it, — rogue trusted rogue, and knave cheated knave, with the best conscience in the world. To what degradation the country must have fallen, when there was no longer “honour among thieves,” let the prudent reader judge, and shudder lest the imagined evil should ever become a real one in his own time.

SECTION XI.

Literature.

BUT what was the literature of this age of reason? In the first place the drama was restored to the purity of its golden days in the reign of King Charles II., and the stage

actually did what it always professes to do, while, night after night, it held “as ’twere the mirror up to nature; showed virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time its form and pressure.” For there was neither vice nor folly in vogue which was not fearlessly represented before the scenes, nor a lingering virtue left which was not dragged forth to ridicule. The performances were naturally applauded to the very echo, not by the groundlings only, but from every tier of the dress-boxes, crowded with beauties, almost as naked, and quite as unashamed, as the Graces.

It is greatly to be regretted that the publications, periodical or permanent, of the day, cannot so much as be named, since when freedom of speech was commensurate with freedom of thought on every subject, the very titles of the books would have conveyed no small information of the character of the time, to those who may conceive it would have been the *acmé* of human felicity to have lived

then. In the library of Oblivion, the largest beyond comparison in the world, containing tall, uncut copies, of nine hundred and ninety nine out of every thousand volumes that have been written since the invention of letters, and defective only in what may be supplied from every shop and stall in town and country, vulgar works, that are in every body's hands, or ought to be, from the epics of Homer to * * * * * — in that multitudinous and well arranged library, of which a bare catalogue would cover the walls of the British Museum, and Bedlam too, presenting a greater curiosity that can be found in the former, and more perverted reason than ever came within the latter ; — in that library of libraries, every line that issued from the press in the course of this true *annus mirabilis*, is safely deposited, and can never be removed or mutilated. Every specimen is as good as new, and will continue so till the dissolution of nature: such works, indeed, (like still-born infants,) cannot grow old. Those of this period, therefore, preserved in that venerable sanctuary,

must still “flourish in immortal youth,” though not to be met with elsewhere throughout the universe. What would not our “black-letter dogs” give for the scent of one of the least of them? comprising —

Histories, as authentic in every respect as that which the reader is now perusing:

Voyages and Travels, as marvellous as those of Mandeville and Munchausen:

Romances, moral, sublime, and pathetic as those of Monk Lewis:

Novels, as exquisitely insipid as the best that come from the Minerva Press, in Leadenhall-street, and produced with as little thought as Minerva herself was from the brain of Jupiter:

Tragedies, as true to nature as the Robbers, the Stranger, and other literary banditti, from German forests, caverns, and castles, in German heads.

Comedies, like those of Congreve and Farquhar in every thing except wit and common sense:

Poetry, like * * * * *, or * * * * *

* * * * * ;—the bastard progeny of genius, which it had been better for the authors never to have been born, than have given birth to ;—works which, happily for mankind, have never been read by any living creature—not even by the writers themselves, it may be added, without any violation of probability ! Would that as much, and as paradoxically true, could be said concerning those of our own age to which we have resembled them, and which their authors may wish to eternity had been as utterly unread either by themselves or others as were those of a non-existent age.

Theology ; —no — no — no : — there was none of this in any shape ; nothing that bore upon the truths of Christianity being either written or read during the whole twelve months, by man, woman, or child. It must be confessed, by the bye, to the credit of the people who lived during this dark interval, that their literature was not prostituted to blasphemy in alliance with obscenity, like that of more enlightened and pious times.

Philosophy ; — in this most intellectual field

for infidel warfare against God and truth, — of course we mean “*vain* philosophy,” there was one book, and only one, of which the very subject is not for ever forgotten. This was the production, or rather, according to his own conception of it, the *imago* of the mind of an eminent sceptic, who, after forty years of profound self-contemplation, — resolutely and perseveringly denying every thing which he was not under the absolute necessity of acknowledging, — had at length discovered, that there was no-body and no-thing in existence but himself; nay, of the latter fact he came no nearer to certainty, than that he *was*, because he *must be*. Yet even here, he refined and refined on the idea, that he was only a personification of non-entity reflecting on itself, — nothing thinking itself something! Not being able, however, to comprehend this, he gave up the point, that is, he continued to contest it; — for, since,

“ The force of *doubting* could no further go,”
he was compelled to stop here, unable to get

forward or backward, like a man who finds himself at a *stand-still*, on the top of a rocking-stone, which he has incautiously climbed, but from which neither his head nor his feet will permit him to descend, except at the peril of breaking his neck. Our philosopher grounded his new system of nature upon this simple axiom, that there could be no *perfect* evidence of truth, either to the mind or the senses, short of that which obliged him to admit his own personal identity. Now as *he* had no evidence of any thing else *equal* to that, he could not be sure that there *was* any thing else; therefore, as a rational doubter, he verily believed that there *was not*. Thus summarily had he arrived at the conclusion before stated,—that he himself was the only being in existence;—that there was neither God, nor Devil, nor man, nor animal, nor plant, nor substance, in the universe;—nay, there was not so much as a universe at all, but only the idea of one, with its infinite and innumerable modifications, in his own mind. Whatever, therefore, came under his view, or

to his knowledge, were pure inventions of his own. Thus all the eloquence, poetry, art, and science contained in all the books that he had ever read,—all the wit, pleasantry, and intelligence of conversation,—all the harangues which he had heard in parliament, at the bar, or from the pulpit,—were the spontaneous fruits of his own prolific thought. With regard to what he had never either read or heard, *that* manifestly existed not at all, except in abstraction; for as he could not be sure that any thing material could have place even in his imagination, unless he had seen, touched, or tasted it, so he contended that, to him, there could be nothing intellectual, which had not already passed through his brain, or would pass through it in the progress of his meditative life; and if it were so to *him*, then, for aught he knew, or could by any possibility ascertain, it might be so *altogether*: hence he inferred, that there *must* be nothing either material or intellectual out of himself, the balance of evidence being decisively a confirmation of unbelief. All beside, there-

fore, — the learning of all men in all ages of the world, which he had not had the means of personally acquiring, being the same to him as if it were not, became absolutely so, because he had not the same proof of it which he had of his own conceptions, — their positive presence within his *sensorium*; and he could have no assurance that *that* existed at all, which had not come under his actual observation, in one distinct form or another, but only in concrete masses, as the vulgar may conceive of the sun, the stars, and their own souls, — something, — nothing, — anything. Thus the people of past generations, heroes, authors, statesmen, kings, and beggars, were no more to him than the unborn; while his contemporaries, (except those whom he had seen, who of course were mere phantasms of his own involuntary creation,) were the same as the inhabitants of the planets, if, indeed there were planets, and those planets were worlds, though to him only ideal ones. Consistently with these notions, all the events of history were fictions, which had occurred

to him in reveries, and been gradually digested into narrative and connection. All the dates in chronology were one long sum in arithmetic; six thousand years, with their numberless records, being but a single idea with its complex ramifications. Geography was equally unsubstantial. Whence came land and water, with their endless diversities, he knew not, and therefore wisely determined that they must have originated with himself, in the everlasting dance of ideas through his brain; much in the same manner, as, according to another system, in somebody else's head, they had been formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. How could he tell that there was such a country as China? He had never been there; and if he had, it would only have been a flight of fancy; consequently China was nothing more than a province of his mental microcosm. Where was the proof that there lived then, or that there ever had lived, a man beside himself? No argument less irresistible than the matter of fact, which forced him, in spite of insurmountable ob-

jections, to acquiesce in his own existence, could convince him of another person's. Now he never had been any body else, *ergo* nobody else had ever been. His book, intituled "*Egotism, or I by itself I,*" was universally read, admired, and laid aside within three months after its appearance.

The periodical literature of this apocryphal era was quite as multifarious as that of our own. The almanacks, published by the Stationers' Company, were without the dominical letter; the fasts, festivals, and saint-days, were undistinguished; indeed the calendar altogether was a black one, as they say at Newgate, of a long list of felons for trial; there was not a red-letter day in three hundred and sixty-five. The newspapers were so much like those which are published every Sunday in the British metropolis, that they need no other commendation here. The reviews, — nay, the present author is not quite such a novice as to say what the reviews were, lest they should appear so heinously to resemble those of some contemporary critics,

that he might be suspected of attempting with the stiletto of the pen, to take unmanly revenge on the latter, for that exemplary justice which they have occasionally inflicted on himself for poetical offences, in years that are past. In this forbearance, however, he confesses that there may be as much discretion as magnanimity ; for were he indeed to raise the reviews of this insane interval to a level with theirs, or degrade these to the level of the former, he might provoke retaliation in an article of which no wise man would choose either to be the object or the author. The magazines, on the other hand, were so much like * * * * *.—It is impossible to decypher another syllable in this part of the original manuscript, the words being all turned into anagrams. It is probable, however, that the publications in question were only like the worst parts of the worst of ours; though with perfect gravity and sincerity, it may be said, that nobody need desire worse reading than the best parts of the best of these. In this eulogium of our most popular miscellanies, the writer disclaims all ambi-

guity; for he would as soon take Jeffery or Giffard by the beard, as affront Blackwood, Sir Richard, Taylor and Hessey, Colbourn, and the men of iron, called editors, (like Talus, with his merciless flail, the companion of the champion of Justice, in the Faerie Queene,) that stand behind those worthy publishers.

SECTION XII.

The Man who lived in a Glass-case, and his Successor.

THERE was another philosopher, beside the egotist afore mentioned, who attracted no small notice among his contemporaries. He was one who contended boldly for the dignity and perfectibility of human nature, and he exemplified both in no ordinary way. Having himself reached that “consummation so devoutly to be wished for” by every body, he built a spacious conservatory entirely of glass, and lived under it, in the eyes of all the world. Nay, on the day when he entered upon the premises, he declared in the ears of

ten thousand people, assembled to witness the ceremonial, that he heartily regretted, for their sakes and his own, that his body and soul were not equally transparent with the walls of his house; that his thoughts, in all their movements, might be seen as plainly as gold fishes, swimming in a globe of crystal.

Hence, it might be presumed that he was the most frank and ingenuous personage alive; free in action as a canary bird bred in a cage; and pure in heart as though he had never known evil; having, according to his own profession, attained the innocence of a second childhood, without falling into the dotage which is the usual concomitant of that state in other people. Being ashamed of nothing that he did, and having therefore nothing to conceal, he ate, drank, and slept in uninterrupted publicity. Hundreds and thousands of persons, from all quarters, flocked daily to behold this phenomenon of virtue. And what did they see?—A human being who lived in perfect masquerade; one, who had not a natural look, word, motion, or feeling.

It would be unjust to say that he was the greatest hypocrite in the world, for he had deceived himself before he imposed upon others; but every thing within him and about him was under restraint. He neither moved hand, nor foot, nor head, without considering how he should appear before the spectators; he spoke not a syllable without weighing its meaning and effect upon the hearers; his very thoughts were under discipline like a pack of hounds, beneath the lash of a thousand eyes, that seemed to look, not only through his glass-walls, but into his breast, as if his body were indeed pellucid, his soul visible through it, and his most hidden ideas betrayed and unravelled like the colours of light by a prism. Sound sleep he never had — for who could sleep with strangers ever gazing on his eye-lids? — but when restless, nervous slumbers overpowered his frame, even in his dreams he was altogether as disguised and unnatural, in feelings and fancies, as he could be during his waking hours; for being painfully conscious that he

was dreaming, he was afraid that whoever passed by would perceive what imagery and incidents were in his brain, and thus all the secret follies of his heart, and the sins of his former life, might be discovered. This became so great a torment, that the misery of acting his daylight part was relief from the agony of apprehension with which he shrunk from the return of night.

“Tired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,” to him was an enemy more dreaded than death; for he had persuaded himself that death would be profound repose, without those dreams that made night hideous to him.

Reverenced and almost worshipped as he was, with an homage as fond and rational as that with which Hindoos regard their penance-doing Fakirs, he at length determined to break prison, and emancipate himself from the oppression of everlasting looks, which bound him like the chains on the limbs of Prometheus, while the insatiable eagle gnawed the undevourable liver. Accordingly one

morning he had disappeared; and though search was made throughout all the country, no tidings of the fugitive were ever brought from any quarter. Some of his admirers affirmed, that he had ascended into the heavens, and been received among the gods; for it might be presumed that the race was not extinct of whom the Greek and Roman poets sang so well, that even “the immortals” could not die in their strains! Others, envious of his fame for sanctity, which they felt as a reproach on their own deeds of darkness, contended that the Devil must have flown away with the fellow, for flesh and blood could never have borne to live so long in the light, unless he had made a contract with the enemy of man. Of the mercantile transactions of that personage in buying the bodies and souls of infatuated mortals, they had read in many credible legends; and as for his existence, (which some people possessed by him deny,) they had never troubled themselves to doubt about the matter, any more than to believe it.

Both parties were mistaken. Clio, the muse by whose inspiration this genuine history hath been written, revealed in a vision the place of his retreat to the eye of her faithful votary. In the depth of a forest, at the extremity of a subterranean passage, under the ruins of a Norman castle, dilapidated to the ground, — the wretched exile sought an asylum, not from his fellow-men only, but from every living creature, except owls, moles, and bats, which he could not shun; and worms, snails, and creeping things, that cannot look into a human face, or, if they can, cannot be perceived to do it. During the day, he remained *perdue* in the darkness of his den; yet still to himself he seemed to live in the house of glass, a spectacle to all who passed by; nor could aught preserve his reason from utterly failing, but the certainty that the scene now was as verily imaginary as it had been real a little while ago. At night he prowled forth to seek his food; how he found it, and what it was, may not be told. But it was only under cloudy

skies, and the umbrage of stupendous trees, impenetrable to moon or star-light, that he ventured to wander out; for, one gorgeous night, as he contemplated the horoscope, when the constellations were beaming with unwonted brilliance, he suddenly fancied that the heavens were set with eyes, — eyes looking *on* him, *into* him, and *through* him: — he retired in consternation, and never again durst encounter their glances.

Of his glass dwelling another philosopher took possession; but he was quite a different character. For several months this new tenant lived in it with credit and comfort, having no sensibilities to be excruciated by the gaze of a blind multitude. It happened, however, during his residence, that there were more burglaries, highway robberies, and other nocturnal outrages, — some of them too horrible to be named here, — than had ever been known in that part of the kingdom before. In the upshot, it was proved, that our hermit in the lantern was either the sole perpetrator, or the ringleader in every one of these.

Stealing out of his day-light hiding-place, as soon as night set in, and he had closed the shutters,—which his predecessor never used, but which he affected to regard as a necessary precaution against enemies, ghostly and bodily, some of whom might otherwise have run away with him, as they had done with the former good man, while he was fast asleep,—he joined a banditti of villains like himself, (all men of good character,) with whom he went out foraging through the neighbourhood. He was at length caught in the fact of breaking open a banker's strong box, and being tried, cast, and condemned, he would assuredly have been hanged, had it been leap year; but when death seemed inevitable, it so happened that the twelve-months ended on the three hundred and sixty-fifth day, at midnight, before the morning appointed for his execution. Thus, if the rascal ever lived at all, he must be living now, and the readers of this history are, therefore, warned to be on their guard against his malpractices; for though it is probable that he

may still be seen in the glass-house by day, at night he must be sought any where else.

SECTION XIII.

A Word or two about Politics.

THE reader no doubt will be curious to know, what the King's most excellent majesty, his ministers, and the two houses of parliament were doing, all this while. It must first be determined in what king's reign these things did *not* happen, before any thing can be said of "a certain great personage," as that never-dying being called *the Sovereign* is sometimes significantly styled; for it is quite certain that this strange era occurred in *his* reign, though of the forty or fifty successive forms of men, women, and children, through whose bodies the king has transmigrated, since he was Alfred the Great, it is not yet ascertained which he then occupied. Nevertheless it may be safely affirmed, that nothing herein contained can be supposed to affect "his person, crown, and dignity," since he became George the Fourth.

Of his ministers, whoever they were, just the same good and evil things, and no other, might be repeated, as are said every day of every year concerning the ministry for the time being, by friends or enemies, as they happen to be rising, fixed, or falling, in their master's or the people's favour. Nothing, therefore, need be hazarded about them here; for whether they were occupied in war or peace, in laying on or taking off taxes, is not precisely known, though most probably the former in both cases.

That there was a House of Peers, and that the government therefore was not "a republic, one and indivisible," may be gathered from something which will be stated hereafter; but there are no documents to prove any thing that their lordships either did or said, in their legislative capacity.

On the House of Commons, a little more light may be thrown. There was a general election in the dog-days of this year, during which all that reformers affirm, constitution-
alists deny, and both are suspected to prac-

tise, in exercising the elective franchise, was daily exemplified, through every form of bribery and corruption, perjury, subornation, violence, intrigue, drunkenness, debauchery, and a hundred other hideous words, for which the reader may consult the largest dictionary of the English language. After Christmas, the representatives of the people met; and, to do them justice, they were in sooth the representatives of the people—such a people as we have been describing through fifty pages past. Who was the speaker, and who were the members, cannot now be recovered from the roll of time; time himself having eaten off that corner, in some ravenous fit, as well as devoured sundry other portions of his journal of this remarkable period. Notwithstanding this defect, it can be satisfactorily proved, that not one of the honourable gentlemen and noble lords who constitute the present House of Commons, had a seat in that. This will be more readily believed, when the reader is informed on the most undeniable authority, that this corrupt assembly

consisted solely of place-men and place-hunters, pensioners and would-be-pensioners, sinecurists, *sansculottes*, demagogues, borough-mongering Whigs, orange Tories, Radicals, and Ultras, with other political and nondescript monsters, which we read of in every newspaper, and see no where in this pure land and patriotic age. Strange as such a character of the most popular and public-spirited council in the world may appear, it must be recollected that “the time was out of joint,” and the verisimilitude will be confirmed, when we mention three principal subjects which came under their discussion; referring indeed to the only three bills that seem to have been brought into parliament, though the session lasted five months, and the debates were prolonged from sunset to sunrise; not one moment of day-light being ever wasted on public affairs, and yet not one of the three bills was passed.

SECTION XIV.

Parliamentary Proceedings.

THE first of this triplicity of legislative abortions, was “A bill for enabling the Poor to maintain themselves.” This humane purpose was to be accomplished in the simplest and most effectual manner, — by one single sweeping clause, repealing all the laws for the relief or support of those who cannot get their own livelihood, whereby these almoners of parish bounty must either starve or provide for themselves. Now, since it was plain that nobody would choose the former, it was very speciously argued that all would do the latter, except perhaps a few old and impotent folks. The manner of disposing of these, however, was so natural and obvious, that the most barbarous nations were led to it by instinct; while the most enlightened, like the Chinese, and the most humane, like the Hindoos, adopted it; the one from the reason of the thing, and the other from tenderness towards the beings whom they were most bound to

love and cherish. It was not, therefore, deemed necessary to add a rider to the bill, authorizing these superfluities of society to be cast out into the woods, exposed on the banks of rivers, or otherwise relieved from the burthen of life, by their affectionate relatives. As for bastard children, the mothers would best know how to deal with them. These encumbrances being thus put out of the way, it was shown how the rest of the paupers would make a sufficient shift to live by vagabondizing, begging, and levying contributions on the highways, or from door to door. But the bill was in jeopardy, when it came to be discussed in committee, by the consideration, that the evils and expence of vagrancy and mendicity, might greatly exceed those of parish rates. The question, in the issue, was decided in a much more popular manner, by a side-wind, which might have overturned the walls of the house upon the heads of the honourable members, had they persisted in the measure. All the men, women, and children in the kingdom, who did *not* pay poor-rates,

but were either in receipt or expectation of a share in these *spolia opima*, joined in petitions against the bill, as numerous and respectably signed as they could be, by persons who could neither read nor write; protesting in the plainest language, — language which could not be misunderstood by the meanest capacity in Billingsgate, — against this flagrant violation of their “vested rights.” They said, and they said truly, that the poor held a mortgage of all the houses and lands in the realm, which they would foreclose, and sell the fee-simple to the Pope, the Pretender, and the grand Turk; also that they had warrants of attorney on the stock in trade of every merchant, manufacturer, and shopkeeper in town and country, on which they would enter up judgment forthwith, if their claims were not inviolably respected. There was so much reason in the prayer, and so much more in the threat contained in these humble addresses, that the firm and upright legislators immediately yielded, and the walls of the house were ordered to be hung with

the parchments on which the petitions had been engrossed, exhibiting a most curious and grotesque variety of signatures more resembling hieroglyphics than hand-writing; that the worthy representatives might, in this significant tapestry, always have the fear of the people before their eyes.

When this question had been laid to rest, a very accomplished young nobleman, the heir of a peerage, asked leave to bring in a bill to put adultery out of the protection of the law! He was almost laughed out of countenance, though blest with a face of flint and a heart of oak, on the annunciation of this notable project. But his lordship soon recovered his credit with the honourable house, and proved that he was no natural fool, when the merriment of the members had so far subsided as to permit him to proceed, though it repeatedly broke out afresh, "till sides and benches failed;" and Mr. Speaker himself, in the gaiety of his heart, was equally unwilling and unable to restrain the disorder. His lordship explained his

views, by stating, that so far from intending to discourage an amiable and fashionable recreation, by putting adultery out of the protection of the law, he merely meant to exonerate it from all legal restrictions, and that upon the soundest principles of equity between man and man. For, whereas in times past the injured husband could sue the destroyer of his peace for damages, it had happened, when these were heavily awarded, that many a man of the highest honour had been put to great pecuniary inconvenience, or obliged to flee to a foreign country, whereby his services to the state, his society to those who had the happiness to be his friends, and the expenditure of his income among his neighbours, had all been lost. These evils might easily be remedied, while perfect satisfaction, — the satisfaction of a gentleman, — might be given to every one who sought redress for such a wrong; and a wrong he confessed it to be. Here, it is said, that the noble lord blushed; but whether at the weakness of the confession, or something else which might

cross his mind at the moment, was known only to himself. The house, meanwhile, was not less astounded at the phenomenon of shame on his cheek, than it had been diverted with delicacy of expression from his lips, in the ambiguous title of this bill. An embarrassing silence ensued, till his lordship could rally his spirits, which that silence rendered tenfold more difficult. At length he proceeded to observe, that since the nation had been enlightened on the subject of futurity, and every body now knew, that nothing but “the blackness of darkness for ever” awaited all who died; — since, in fact, it had been discovered, that “to die” was but “to sleep — no more;” — “the be-all, and the end-all here,” &c. &c. duels had become proportionately frequent; and life was held so cheap, that nobody with the education of a gentleman would refuse to hazard it, for the pleasure of proving his affection for the woman whom he loved, especially if her value to him was enhanced, (as it ought to be,) by her being the wife of his friend or his benefactor. Wherefore,

as the trial by this “wager of battel” was quite even, the enraged husband, on challenging the seducer, would either have prompt reparation for the injury done to his honour by losing his own life,—in which case the injury would cease,—and who could bear existence under the sense of degradation like his?—or he would have revenge (the sweetest feeling next to love itself,) in taking away the life of his adversary, who would thus be removed beyond the possibility of ever repeating the offence.—There was something so courteous, so rational, and so brave in all this, that leave would probably have been granted; but it was discovered, that adultery-bills must, of right, originate with the House of Lords, (which implies that there *was* such a house at the time,) as money-bills, of right, originate in the House of Commons. Hereupon the undaunted sprig of nobility rose and said, that so soon as the noble lord his father died, and he vowed to—— (the word is absolutely undecypherable which he used,) he cared not how early the lamentable

day might arrive, — he would renew his motion in the right place.

The third and last grand effort of parliament for the public welfare in this session, was to realize the scheme of a celebrated politician and divine of the last century ; and after much preliminary discussion, a bill was brought in “for the abolition of Christianity.” On this grave question, as on the slave-trade and catholic emancipation, the cabinet ministers took no corporate part ; but each member was at liberty to vote according to his conscience or his caprice, which was nearly the same thing, the subject being one on which not a man among them cared any more than for his own soul. As might be expected, the affirmative was powerfully supported by many of the ablest debaters on both sides of the house ; who, as might likewise be expected, employed just such arguments against the thing called Christianity in the title of the bill, as men entirely ignorant of that which they are opposing always use, — cool falsehood, vehement invective, and malignant sar-

casm. But the cause of Christianity was not less zealously, obstinately, and absurdly maintained by others equally arrayed from the ministerial and the opposition benches. These made their stand on two grounds; the first was, — though that passed for very little, — that such an act would be an act of supererogation, which in a protestant country was nothing worth; for there being in truth no such thing as Christianity in the island, to abolish that which was *not*, was to do that which was impossible. The impossibility, however, might have been easily overcome; but the ground on which the innovation proposed by the bill was most confidently and successfully resisted, was the broad constitutional one, namely, that “Christianity is part and parcel of the law of England.” Now, although nobody knew any more about Christianity than what these ten cabalistical words imply, the lawyers to a man (and they constituted no small proportion of the house), took their stand on the immoveable, the immortal basis of this *dictum*, and denied most

emphatically that Christianity could be abolished, because it was “part and parcel of the law of England.” Night after night, the controversy was renewed and adjourned, renewed and adjourned again, and again, and again. Every gentleman of the long robe, seeing it was a case of which he understood not a syllable, took the opportunity of delivering his sentiments at full length, on the peril and wickedness of destroying that, which from time “whereof the memory of man knoweth not to the contrary,” was and is, therefore should be, and would be, “part and parcel of the law of England.” Those who remember with what gravity, acuteness, and pertinacity the hanging, drawing, quartering, and dismembering clauses of the high treason law, — though as obsolete in practice as the statutes respecting witchcraft — were defended, against the arguments and humanity of Sir Samuel Romilly, will be at no loss to guess how the cause of Christianity was advocated by the corps of “learned friends.” Yet when they had talked about it and about it, till their

ratiocinations seemed equally without beginning, middle, or end, not one of them could say more than what has been repeatedly quoted, but which may well bear another citation here, — “Christianity is part and parcel of the law of England:” and this prevailed even in that first year of the age of reason which this kingdom had ever seen, and the last, it may be positively predicted, that this kingdom will ever see. It was in reality the voice of reason speaking by the mouth of fools, who neither comprehended nor cared to comprehend a word of its meaning, but who stuck to the oracle of truth not less faithfully than they would have stuck to the most preposterous law fiction, — as one of the secrets of the craft whereby they got their wealth. Yet even from their lips it was the voice of reason, and it prevailed. Such was the impression made on the fears and prejudices of their hearers by the tongues of the lawyers, rattling like false dice, and always turning up the same side, however diversely, dexterously, or desperately

thrown, that when the house divided, the “*ayes*” and “*noes*” were equal. Hereupon the Speaker, in the noble language of the barons at Runnymede, gave his casting vote against the bill, and in favour of Christianity, by pronouncing in the true senatorial tone, “*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*”

That instant the clock struck twelve, being midnight of Saturday, June * * * *, corresponding with the commencement of that Sabbath morning with a description of which this chapter was opened, and with the close of which it must be concluded; for the author, suddenly recovering from a reverie, found that the whole interpolated year had only occupied the time and space of half an hour’s walk between his dwelling and * * * * *. In fact, it had only existed in his own imagination, which hath here more amply bodied forth the forms of things that flitted through its fairy region, and given to many an “airy nothing a local habitation and a name.”

Whether he can be justified in promulgating so outrageous a fiction, is a matter on

which good men may be divided in opinion. He can, however, honestly affirm, that he has not been combating giants and dragons of his own creation, nor telling a marvellous tale for the stupid diversion of tooth-picking time-killers. There has been an aim and a moral in all that he has written ; even when he has hazarded censure by an apparent excess of frivolity on the one hand, or exaggeration on the other. He may not indeed have made himself always intelligible either in the fable, or the application ; but after this exposure of his own views, he will frankly appeal to the judgments of his readers, to enquire for themselves, what would be the probable effects of the entire extinction of Christian principles, sanctions, and ordinances, with their immediate and indirect influence on the manners of society, and the public institutions of this land. When they have satisfied themselves on this subject, the author, in conclusion, would press the question home upon the consciences of all whom it concerns, — whether the Gospel of Jesus Christ be not a greater

glory, blessing, and defence to this United Kingdom, than it has ever yet entered into the minds of statesmen, philosophers, or poets to conceive; and whether to be deprived of this would not be the greatest calamity that could befall its inhabitants, from the king on the throne to the meanest of his subjects?

THE EGOTIST.

No. III.

A FORENOON AT HARROGATE.

I AM not so much at home here as I was at Scarborough last year: — there I had perfect retirement in my spacious apartments, and could be “myself alone,” without the apprehension of eyes and ears being spies on my motions. I could sit, stand, walk, or lie down, at pleasure; I could read, write, or do neither; I could look out of the window to discover islands and continents in the clouds; or pore over my fire in an evening before candle-light, and build ruined castles, or trace the lineaments of human faces and the shapes of nondescript animals, among the consuming embers, without interruption or annoyance. Here, — between the sound

of perpetual footsteps in the passage, the phenomena of figures stalking by the low window in front of the parade, and “airy voices that syllable men’s names” on every side, — my little parlour is never at peace from noises and spectacles that bewilder attention and disturb my reveries. I can think here as freely as I could at Scarborough, but I cannot fix my thoughts, or pursue them in a train upon paper. They flock about me like pigeons, while I merely feed them; but if I attempt to catch them, they all take wing in a moment, and leave me gazing through vacancy at their flight. I will, however, try to net a few, as memorials how I spent my time here; but I must spread my toils very circumspectly, and take whatever comes, good, bad, and indifferent, in the hope that there may be one idea among a hundred worth the trouble of recording the rest.

It was a clear dark night, without the moon, towards the close of September. Many of the most splendid constellations were abroad in the heavens, and shed their

purest influence on the earth beneath, where nothing was visible but black masses of shade, whose uncouth outlines broke the ring of the horizon. Among the buildings at Low Harrogate, scattered lights in upper rooms, by their sudden appearance, quick motions, and early extinction, showed that the visitors and inhabitants, like myself, were retiring to rest. My last look, when I put out my candle, was towards the sky. The planets Jupiter and Saturn, with their beams nearly touching each other, were lords of the ascendant, and shone with steady lustre in the south-east; while, towards the zenith and in the north, the fixed stars were sown so thickly, that they seemed to twinkle all at once, and the galaxy gleamed beyond them, like the twilight of eternity on the confines of our universe. There was nothing changeable, or indicative of change above. Thus might the firmament have stood from creation, and thus it might continue till the dissolution of nature, a spectacle of wonder and beauty, whose silence speaks to the soul in a language which may be felt

but not uttered. While I gaze upon the sky I forget every thing below it : but the spirit rests not there ; — “ hope, full of immortality,” carries adoring thought to the footstool of the throne of “ Him that liveth for ever and ever.”

Fixed in eternal repose though the heavens appeared, I knew that the stars were in their courses ; I knew that the pageantry would soon be gone by, and morning would come, as it has never failed to do since the first day after chaos. On this occasion, therefore, for I had an eye towards the morrow—so unconsciously selfish we are, — I anticipated a fine morning and a delightful harvest-day, after a night of such serene and imperturbable quiet. I lay down in hope, I slept in peace, I awoke in health. Leaving my bed, I sprang eagerly towards the chamber window : a fine morning had indeed risen on the earth, and a delightful harvest-day was probably behind ; but there had been a storm in the night ; the highways were glittering with pools of water, and the gardens were drenched and drooping

beneath the weight of rain that had fallen while I was dreaming of any thing rather than what was happening around. Had the ground been hoary with frost, every blade, leaf, and flower fantastically feathered, and the horse-shoe marks in the road filled with crescents of ice, I should not have been much surprised, for the evening had been cold. In sleep we are, in reference to the realities on every side of us, as we were before we were born, and as we shall be when we shall be no more. They are non-existent to us, till we awake and discover that they are, or have been, and left their traces behind. This is to me a perplexing speculation. Where was I when Adam and Eve dwelt in Paradise ; — when the whole race of man, except one family, were swept away with the flood that ingulphed the highest mountains, and the earth presented to the sun one face of rolling water, with a single speck, the ark, in motion on it ? — What was I doing when the pyramids were building ; — when Greece and Rome were in their glory ; — when Cæsar landed

on the shores of Britain; — when Saxon Alfred was an exile in Athelney; — when William the Conqueror invaded England; — when the houses of York and Lancaster were slaughtering a vassal population from reign to reign? Had I no form or consciousness when Columbus first crossed the Atlantic Ocean, or Vasco de Gama doubled the Cape of Storms? What was I when Luther was combating the power of Papal Rome; — or when the martyrs of Smithfield were sealing their testimony of that truth, which has been delivered from them to me, with their blood? How was I circumstanced, when thousands and tens of thousands of events like these engaged the attention, and decided the destinies of millions and hundreds of millions of beings such as I am precisely, in frame and feelings, hope and fear, action and passion; but who are now no more — no more to us who are alive than if they had never been, — and yet so much, that the very existence and fortune, character of mind and constitution of body, of each of us might be traced backward

through all generations, if retrospective discoveries could be made in unchronicled matters of fact, as they may be in the recovery of arts and sciences long lost? All these personages were here, and were gone—who can tell whither? — before I had a being; and I found the world as they had left it, — as they had made it. The rain of last night, though I was living and breathing in the midst of it (under cover, it is true), was to me as if it had fallen during the siege of Troy, with this difference only, when it was over, that it caused me to step more warily as I went to the wells, lest I should soil my shoes. When I am in the grave I can conceive something relative to myself, and with what kind of sympathy (ascribing a few, at least, of my present feelings to my future dust,) I might be affected by the rising and falling of empires over my head; but *before* I was born all is mystery and nonentity. I am lost to imagine that any thing could be *when* I was not; — and is it not equally incomprehensible how any thing can be *where* I am not? Yet

within a mile of me, at this instant, a million things are happening, of which I am as ignorant, and for ever shall be, as if they had occurred in the heart of China, or under the North Pole. What, for example, is the fly doing now, which, five minutes ago, whisked in and out of my window as quick as wings could carry it? Where is the beetle, that was trying so manfully, yesterday evening, to climb up the side of this house, but tumbled on his back as often as he had ascended a few inches, sprawling there till I set him on his legs again to renew his Sysiphean labour? What is that old man thinking about, who is hastily but lamely crossing over to the spa? How felt the poor hectic lady, whose eye, as she lifted up her head from a sepulchral coughing fit, unluckily caught mine, when I looked out angrily at the fellow in boots and broad cloth yonder, talking to somebody whom I cannot see, in a voice just loud enough to *make* me understand half of what he says, and wonder what the other half can be? — But I must quit this labyrinth of

queries, or I shall wander in it all day after every body's business but my own.

Coming down stairs, and entering my parlour, a hideous monster started up before me, bolt against the wall, and over the fireplace, — to which, wherever I am, I go by instinct, winter and summer. I recoiled and escaped the sight of it, — for it had no power to harm me otherwise, — which to be sure was small consolation, for the phantom was only the reflection of myself in a wretch of a looking-glass, so cross-grained and perverse, that it seemed to have a malicious pleasure in making faces at me, of every ugly size and shape except my own. It is mortifying enough to see one's foolish features as they are, — especially when like mine they are rather worse for wear. To be caricatured thus, without any provocation given, *may* be retributive justice for many a self-complacent glance at more flattering mirrors in the days of our vanity; but when incipient wrinkles and grey hairs have made ravages which twenty years could not re-

pair — unless I might live them backward, — such usage, to say the least of it, is very unhandsome. In how many gaudy rooms at inns and lodging-houses, are we thus affronted to the beard !

I turned away, and went to the wells, where in five minutes I saw as many strange faces, under all forms of contortion, as my looking-glass itself could show me. Here were men, women, and children, of all kinds, drinking the delicious beverage, that makes every one who ventures to taste it look — just as *it* smells. I have no pleasure in seeing manly, intelligent, and beautiful countenances grotesquely transformed like those of the rabble-rout of Comus ; so, after having swallowed my potion, and gone through my grimaces, I walked off to the Crown parade. There I took my turn and played my part among the motley company, consisting of grandees of the realm, ladies of fashion, — people that *are* somebody, and people that like myself only think themselves so, though nobody knows us, and ourselves least of all ;

yet have we the happy persuasion, that others will look upon us with just such eyes as we choose to put into their heads, and admire in us that excellence (whatever it may be) which we are not sure we possess, but the want of which we fondly hope that strangers will not detect in us. Watering-places are masquerades on a great scale, and in open day-light; but this idea is too good to be run down among the *insignificabilia* of a forenoon's journal;—it shall be a bag-thought to be turned out and hunted another day.

After taking a second dose, — while it is going down, I will make no invidious comparison between the nymphs that minister these delectable waters, and the muses that deal out the inspiring draughts of Helicon to supplicating bards, though, having seen both sisterhoods, and proved the virtue of either stream, I ought to be a competent judge: — after taking a second dose, I went to the promenade-room; the morning being fair, the saunterers were few.

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At half past nine o'clock I returned to my quarters, after ten minutes' conversation with Mr. B. on the following subjects, as we walked backward and forward, in the warm sunshine, on the Crescent parade; viz.—the weather,—Alderman Wood,—Bradford woolcombers,—Merino sheep,—Barnsley linen-weavers,—poor rates,—employment of the poor,—Sheffield cutlers,—Lawyer S., and the rain that fell last night; I mean early this morning. By-the-bye, I wonder what part of the day *is* night: till twelve o'clock we call the time evening; and the moment the clock has struck twelve, the watchman bawls “a fine morning.” It would take as much labour in vain to settle this point, and leave it unsettled at last, as was bestowed about the commencement of the present century, to determine, whether it began with the year 1800 or 1801; concerning which the learned are yet undecided, and will be till the arrival of another century shall change the figures, but not the ground of the dispute.

When I reached my rooms I found a letter

from * * * * on the table. How welcome is such a messenger, especially the first that reaches us in a strange place ! This contained little more than an insignificant document, to be returned immediately with the blanks filled up ; and yet it carried me home with all my heart and affections. — It brought my own fire-side into the little parlour here, and I sat down by it in imagination, while I stood upon my legs in reverie, experiencing how sweet it is to be remembered in absence by those whom we love. I did not see the postman, nor have I ever seen him ; if I had, I dare say I should not forget him. I think I recollect every letter-carrier from whom I have been in the way of receiving such communications either at home or abroad. How often has the sight, the shadow, the footstep of such an humble individual, trudging with his wallet of letters, made my heart beat with anxiety, desire, disappointment, or hope, when he passed by without a call, or left a packet which I trembled to open, and was transported with joy, or withered with chagrin to

read ! Letters are the conversations of spirits, embodied indeed, yet holding communion as surely, and more intimately, than by word of mouth. There are things which may be written, but must not be spoken ; there are words on paper, that will indelibly imprint themselves upon the mind, which would have made no impression there, delivered through the ear, with all the aid of look, gesture, and emphasis accompanying them ; for written thought is thought made visible, and the eye, after all, is the quickest and most intelligent of the senses.

Having breakfasted heartily, as usual after these hungry waters, I wrote a line or two in the margin of the document which I had received, folded it up again letter-wise, and put it unsealed into my pocket ; intending to call on some lady-friends of mine, who had lodgings at High Harrogate, that I might convey, if they desired it, a message from them to their family, as we country cousins are accustomed to do, one for another, when we meet from home, and our homes happen to be in the

same neighbourhood. When I had done this, a tall, respectable, but singular-looking gentleman, with a smiling, friendly-eyed helpmeet on his arm, called on me. They introduced themselves, without announcing who they were, as having once before in their lives, in another part of this island, been in company with me; and though but for an evening, they were willing to renew acquaintance, having seen my name in the promenade room. I said, that I was glad to see them; and I spoke the truth, for advances of kindness from strangers, are as grateful and refreshing as the honey of wild bees, found unexpectedly in hollow rocks, amidst the desarts of Billedulgerid. The lady presently dropt her husband's name from her tongue; and then I recollected the time, the place, and the circumstances under which we had formerly met, — eleven years ago at Matlock, where I was with my brother and his little family, just come from abroad. A few of the few pleasant days of my clouded and turbulent life came over my mind; and Matlock, in

autumn, with its rocks, woods, streams, and mountains; its mornings and evenings, when the sun may be seen to rise and set seven times a day, from the windings and declivities of its glen; but beyond all, its moonlight, the loveliest, softest, richest that I ever beheld: Matlock, thus adorned with indescribable beauty, opened on my imagination; and I revelled in all the romance of that kind of feeling which makes remembered pleasures sweeter than they were even in reality. My visitors remained with me about half an hour. As soon as I caught a glimpse of his form and countenance, I thought that I must have known the gentleman before; but whether in a dream or in fact might have puzzled me, if an explanation had not followed. There are some images that we never forget, and his was one, — a statue in no mean niche of my memory.

When they were gone I set out for High Harrogate. I took the road by the further fields, passing a gate on the right hand, on either side of which stand the two jaw bones

(I believe) of a whale, such as we frequently see in the northern counties, generally forming a kind of Gothic arch over the humble entrance into a field, though here reversely disposed, and stretching out like two blasted arms of an ancient oak. I have often paused to ponder over these relics of an animal, in whose stupendous frame they were but proportionate parts. I can fancy myself a horse bounding over a race-course ; perhaps an ass, browsing upon thistles ; a deer followed by hounds and huntsmen in full cry ; a swallow on the wing, snapping flies, from morning till night ; a parrot in a cage talking nonsense with as much gravity as if he were rational ; a gnat buzzing about the nostrils of a lion ; a butterfly fluttering from flower to flower, and a thousand other creatures great or small : but I cannot for the life of me diffuse my soul through a whale, floundering at large amidst the immensity of ocean, — though that must be glorious pastime ; and in a dolphin I could enjoy it. In the king of fishes, however, imagination itself is at a loss to put forth its feel-

ers far enough to animate so huge a mass of bone and blubber. I cannot identify my puny self with so much mortality at once: the tail, or one of the fins, in which there is some quick action, would be a province large enough for my spirit to occupy; the floating island of the whole carcass, it could only haunt. Yet set that spirit free from corporeal restraint, and it will soar to the stars, dive into the deep, expatiate over the earth, and range with unlimited freedom wherever the light of science or the enterprize of thought can penetrate:—

“How poor, how rich, how abject, how august;
How complicate, how wonderful is man!”

Night Thoughts.

The whale, however, is a fellow-creature with which I can sympathize little more than if it were the inhabitant of another world, as it is of another element.

I had not proceeded far, when I recollected that there was a thicker crop of beard on my chin than it is usual, except in the shape of

whiskers, to carry into the presence of ladies. Accordingly I turned back to the shop of my barber. It was nearly twelve o'clock, yet he had not made his appearance among his block-heads, leaving the wiseacres that called on him to the mercy of his lad, who was of an age fitter to be a sand-writer in a Lancasterian school, than a performer of operations which formerly were committed to the skilful hands of surgeons only. Young Strap's razor would neither cut nor saw well, though of the two it did the latter best, having two lamentable notches in the edge, which he assured me came there he knew not how. Whether he or I exercised most patience during the performance I cannot say; he certainly *shewed* most. Indeed from the coolness with which he inflicts the torture, I could honestly recommend him as shaver for the Holy Inquisition; and I would warrant him to "put the question" without flinching, to the longest-bearded Jew that ever fell into their clutches.

Leaving my tormentor, and staunching

two wounds which he had left as tokens of his prowess on my face, I walked forward to High Harrogate, and called on my fair friends. Having received their commands respecting a message home, I borrowed a stick of wax, and, with great difficulty, contrived to seal my letter, without either burning it or my fingers, for the window being open (I never thought of shutting it, annoyed as I was,) and a fresh breeze blowing in from the common, the flame of the taper streamed like a flag horizontally towards both, which I took special care to keep in its way. When I had blundered successfully through this achievement, I set off again to put the letter into the post office, which was a few yards below my friend's lodgings. Unluckily, having to call at the bookseller's shop between, I forgot my main errand; and when I left the latter place, my legs carried me unconsciously forward, through the style, and half way down the first field behind the Dragon, on the way back to Low Harrogate.

Here I met a grave gentleman in black,

who, having two eyes in his head, fixed them upon me as I passed him. That instant I recollected that I had not put my letter into the post office, which was already a considerable distance behind. There were two lounging livery servants, a black and a white, on the footpath before me, whom I must overtake in a few paces; nor was there any escape to the right hand or to the left: I must therefore either turn back from the spot, or go down to Low Harrogate, and make an hour's journey to manœuvre my way to the post office, without being quizzed by the party-coloured knaves, or the personage afore mentioned, as having committed some mistake of which I had just recollected myself,—one of the last dilemmas in which a man likes to have spies upon his motions. To turn back may be a fault—the fault of a weak head, as mine is,—but to be detected in turning back is punishment enough for it, in all conscience. This, however, was the shortest horn of the dilemma, and I chose it; walking very slowly, lest I should overtake

the gentleman, whose glance *en passant* had already penetrated as far into my brain as my vulnerable face, which never was “dipt in Lethe’s lake,” would admit. I watched him from behind up to the style, as steadily as a pointer sets a bird, and stepping as softly after;—having an irksome presentiment that when he arrived there he would turn back. He did so;—of course we met again, crossed, and looked as wise as two people feeling that they look like fools can do. I will be revenged on him here.—Who was he? Truly, I know not; but I can guess the worst, and set him down for what I please. He was no conjuror, I am sure; yet from appearance he was a very middling kind of a man;—that hint will do:—in every situation of life then, he would have been such,—a middling shoe-black, a middling tradesman, a middling scholar, a middling poet, a middling philosopher, a middling statesman, a middling king! And there I leave him; for he would never have risen above, nor sunk below, the level of his birth and fortune. He

had just an average mind to learn or do any thing which others had learned and done before him; but if he had lived a thousand years he could never have conceived a new thought or invented a new mouse-trap. Had the world been entirely peopled with such human beings, there could have been no more improvement made by the species in six thousand years, than there has been by lions and tygers, by sheep and oxen, in the manners of the forest or the field, during the same period. He had not a grain of originality about him, — and yet if this be not an original character, I am sorry for it: I did not intend to borrow one feature that I have lent him from any source but my own imagination, — all these traits being so purely imaginary, that were he to see this sketch he would not know himself in it.

Having escaped him, I hurried to the post-office, and duly deposited my epistle there. As I neither robbed the box nor the man who afterwards carried the mail-bags to Weatherby, I can give no account of the com-

panions of its own species which my letter found in either receptacle : were I writing a book, however, and wanted matter, I might easily spin out a few pages in conjectures about the contents and fantastic character of these secret and swift messengers of love, business, health, fashion, &c. &c. as various, no doubt, as the writers themselves, who are at this time on errands of the aforesaid nature at Harrogate.

To return to my quarters by the way which I had intended was out of the question, except at the peril of meeting again the middle-sized, middle-aged, middle-every-thing kind of a man already sufficiently celebrated. Having two hours yet to mispend before dinner, I determined to saunter about the common and plantations, to breathe the pure air which was now all abroad among the flying clouds and intermitting sunshine. Crossing over toward the Hope, I passed the church. It has often occurred to me in visiting watering-places, that their church-yards have a peculiar character. They are not the dormitories

only of families and neighbours from generation to generation ; — they are also “ fields to bury strangers in.” Let any man step into one of these, and read a few epitaphs, — when it will be much if he does not find memorials of the dead who came thither from his own vicinity, in quest of pleasure or health, like himself, but thence were never suffered to return. *Here* I have not made any sepulchral researches ; but in the church-yards of Scarborough and Fairfield, near Buxton, I have been especially affected by noticing this circumstance, with which many a melancholy idea is associated.

Oh ! when we are ill, to have our own home, our own bed, our own friends, — servants, neighbours, every thing familiar, endeared, and vital to comfort by daily use and acquaintance ! *They* have incomprehensible feelings — have they any feelings at all ? — who would choose, as Sterne somewhere affects, to die at an inn, among those who cared not for them living, nor would mourn for them dead. I would be *prepared* to die

any where, at any time, under any circumstances, among strangers, barbarians, enemies; — yet, though it might be the sharpest pang of the conflict, to wring the bosoms of the few that love me with my sick fancies, and my dying throes, — last words, last looks, last sighs, — I would *desire* no other witnesses, when heart and flesh were failing. And they, methinks, — they would not willingly be absent from the scene which human nature most shudders to encounter, — the parting, at the grave's brink, with one whom nothing can detain. Then the sad change that ensues in the dwelling-house where death has been, — who could flee from it, with all its tenderness of terror? — The silence after the struggle is past, a repose more dreadful than the agony that preceded; the darkness of that chamber in which, though dim, the light was never permitted to be extinct; the stillness where all was motion, — motion that shunned to be seen or heard, but yet perpetual motion; neglect, but not the neglect of unkindness, where, with unceasing solici-

tude, every pulse, look, breath, was eagerly watched, and every want and wish anticipated; loneliness, where not for a moment the sufferer was left, even in slumber:—above all, the night after death, while the corpse is yet under the roof with the disconsolate survivors; — the night after interment, when the living and the departed, for the first time, but for ever, are separated, in the body. And, oh! when the vehemence of grief hath yielded to the anguish that weeps not, that speaks not, — the internal bleeding of the heart, which none can see, and only one can feel, — for each, however common be the woe, must “mourn apart,” — the sight of the chamber, the bed, the chair, the garments, the very trinkets of the deceased, all hallowed with innumerable, undefinable associations, that turn despondency into transport, while the mind clings to remembrances that cling to *it*, and will not be shaken off; till, forgetting that the bitterness of death is past, we long in delirium for another hour, if it were but one, of such sympathizing misery

as we unrepiningly endured before the deliverance from all pain of the beloved of our soul ! — I must tear myself from such recollections, — such anticipations, for past and future, equally assail me in this train of thought.

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Walking on the outside of the plantations near Dr. Jacques's, by the trench which divides the fence from the common, I observed on the opposite bank, many funguses of one description, — crimson, studded with white stars ; some in bulbs of the deepest colour, others half spread, and a few full open, as broad as the crown of my hat, and withal so graceful and showy, that the most loathsome productions of the soil were thus rendered beautiful to the eye and tempting to the hand. I looked, and longed to pluck, first one, then another ; but they were all safe beyond my reach, and from their mossy battlements defied me either to leap or ford the impassable moat that guarded them.

Funguses to me are vegetable toads, frogs, efts, lizards, — all that is cold, slimy and venomous; but as they do not jump, and have no eye of jet and amber to thrill one with horror, I can occasionally stand to admire their gorgeous liveries and elegant proportions. The royal table of Queen Mab and King Oberon, on their coronation-day, with all the court of fairy-land about it, dining at midnight, on dew and ambrosia, under the yellow moonbeams, could not have been more stately, or richly caparisoned than some of these circular forms on their silver stems, overlaid with nature's satin, and embroidered with spangles most delicately wrought. While I was impatiently coveting these unapproachable rarities, I arrived at a gate which led into the plantation. I entered eagerly, and found, as I had expected, the ground strewn with similar funguses blushing through the thick matted grass, that still sparkled with moisture to the sunbeams, glancing between the dwarf fir-trees. I determined to gather at least one superb specimen, — but then it

must be perfect in shape, size, colour, every thing; — I looked at twenty or thirty in succession, but found a flaw in each, and rejected all; till, after plucking two or three, I broke them in pieces, scattered the relics in the walk, where they looked like red and white ivory toys, — and came away empty-handed, at last. Did ever mortal man value what his eye and his heart had most desired while it was unattainable, as much in possession as in hope?

My time being nearly expired, I hastily returned over the common towards the Queen's Head. In the roughest part, and many yards distant from any path, I heard some twittering sounds near my feet, and wondered that the bird, if they proceeded from a bird, was not startled by my approach. Looking cautiously round, I discovered within a few paces a little cage, under the shadow of a magnificent thistle, whose prickly arms and feathered heads hung over it like the branches of a great oak over the roof of a cottage, — presenting, on a small scale, a very

pretty scrap of the picturesque, in the midst of a wilderness of fern and furze. In this snug hermitage, I perceived a chatter-box of a goldfinch, who was feasting himself deliciously on the fruit of the thistle, and hopping nimbly about, from perch to perch of his wire-wattled pen, jealous apparently, as I drew near, lest I should put in my claim for part of the treasure which he had found on the waste, and wished to keep to himself. I smiled with a pity equally bordering on good-nature and contempt, at the little vivacious rogue, and said to him, in my way ; — for shy as I am of entering into conversation with strangers of my own species, I delight to talk with “dumb creatures,” that can neither understand nor answer me ; — “No, no, Goldy,” said I, “eat and be merry ; I’ll not rob thee of a single grain of thistleseed ; no, nor a film of down : but be moderate, thou devourer ; be moderate, lest thou die of apoplexy with over-feeding on fare so luxurious.” Wondering how he got there, seeing he had a good house over his

head, which made his wings unnecessary, — not to say useless, — I looked round to see to whom he belonged, thinking that he had been brought thither to graze, as a poor man's cow or ass is sometimes tethered by the leg in a green lane, to pick up a hedge-side meal, while the owner is watching at a distance. A considerable way off, I observed a lady, with a child in her hand, walking where there was no track, but not apparently afraid of me carrying off the prize. Deeming these to be the guardian angels of the happy prisoner, I left him chirping, and skipping, and cracking his seeds ; for, exulting in my own freedom, which his captivity made me *feel* through every limb, I neither envied him his cage, his thistle, nor even his gay plumage, — black, white, red, and golden, — which has obtained for him the vulgar name of “ Proud Tailor.” On mentioning the circumstance afterwards, I was led to suspect that there might be another reason, besides that of his own epicurean indulgence, for placing the pretty rogue in this sequestered

paradise, — namely, as a decoy-bird, to tempt others of his own thoughtless species to flock to him, who, while they attempted to partake of his good cheer, should be entangled with limed threads wound about the ramifications of the thistles, which I had not perceived, and which, for the honour of human nature, I hope, were spread no where but in my head, where I am sure they would catch no goldfinches. Be this as it may, the idea has spoiled the innocent romance of this scene to me.

I had one adventure more. In the fields as I went down to Low Harrogate, a group of poor little girls were gathering blackberries, or rather, seeking them in the hedge, which was very high and thick. They scrambled as eagerly, and tore their clothes and scratched their arms and faces as heroically, as I was wont to do, when I was a school-boy, and went a nutting in * * * * * woods. There were none, as far as I could see, except hard, unripe, red berries, within their reach ; but just as I came up, one of the

children, pointing to the topmost twig of the furthest bramble in the bush, cried out in a transport, “ See what *three* fine blackberries are yonder !” and instantly she made a resolute effort to force the thicket, and take the spoil by storm. The first impulse of my mind, — and it was the right one, — was, with the crook of my umbrella, to bring down the towering boughs whereon grew the Hesperian fruit, which, though defended by dragons’ teeth on every side, I might easily have thus secured to the girls, by stretching out my hand ; — but there was immediately behind, — I could hear his firm step, and see his long shadow following me on the grass, — a gentleman two yards high, and very majestic, in whose presence I durst not demean myself by an act of humanity. I was therefore spell-bound to walk forward in a right line, which I did, condemning my own want of decision. — I hope, however, the lasses got the blackberries, no thanks to me.

AN AFRICAN VALLEY.

PART I.

“As when one findeth a good grape in the cluster, and sayeth, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.”

LOWTH'S *Isaiah*, lxxv. 8.

EARLY in the eighteenth century, at an obscure village in Lusatia, there lived a poor man, whose Christian name was George; the humble associate of a few refugees, who, having escaped from Austrian intolerance, after suffering the loss of all things for the testimony of a good conscience, had sought refuge on the estate of a Saxon nobleman. In the midst of a forest they built habitations, and a church; and there, supporting themselves by painful labour, they worshipped the God of their fathers according to the rites which had

been transmitted to them through many generations, as descendants from the Hussites. Scarcely, however, had these fugitives found rest for the soles of their feet, than, moved by the greatest principle in operation throughout the universe, — the love of God, manifesting itself in love to man, — there were those among their little company who went forth to the ends of the earth, carrying to the most forlorn of their fellow-creatures those good tidings of great joy which the angel, at the birth of our Saviour, told this shepherds should be unto all people.

Among these was the plain and simple-hearted peasant above mentioned. He was a man of clear understanding, invincible courage, and most affectionate zeal in the cause of that truth, for which he had already borne six years' cruel imprisonment in his native country, besides his share in the common persecution that drove him and his companions into banishment. To be a day-labourer, a mechanic, or a menial servant, — one who should minister to the conveniences, or pander

to the voluptuousness of others, eating bread all his days in the sweat of his brow, or rioting on the offals of rich men's tables, — was the utmost of what might have been predicted concerning him from the circumstances of his birth and education : but the grace of God ennobles the meanest subject of its influence ; and there was a glory reserved for our nameless exile, before which kings, and conquerors, and laurelled bards might rise up, and veil their honours in reverence to it. The wish came into his mind to go and dwell among the Hottentots in South Africa, that he might speak to them “ words whereby they should be saved.” He had heard of their ignorance, vice, and degradation, and his heart yearned within him over their deplorable enthrallment. Under the filth and deformity of the harshest exterior that claims affinity with the brotherhood of man, he could discern an immortal spirit on its passage through time to an unchangeable state, of which nothing is known beyond the terms of the last sentence on the righteous and the wicked.

At length, almost as poorly provided as the first apostles, he sailed from Holland with the prayers and benedictions of his brethren. He went alone, yet not unaccompanied; for He, who called Amos from gathering sycamore fruit to be a prophet through all generations, had appointed to him his task, and never forsook him in the performance of it. On his arrival at Cape Town having obtained permission of the governor to settle in the interior, he began his pilgrimage with a staff and a scrip, hands to labour, and the means of procuring a few implements of husbandry. In simplicity of purpose he wandered forth in quest of outcasts whom he had never seen, and of whom he had heard nothing but evil; he went to speak comfortably to them; he went to do them good. How beautiful then on the mountains were the feet of him that came to publish peace! Yet like his meek and lowly Master, wherever he turned he was despised and rejected by Christians and Heathen. The Dutch boors (the farmers on insulated plots of cultivation

throughout the colony) were as incapable of comprehending the object of his mission as the barbarians themselves; for it appeared, that, at the sacrifice of home, country, and friends, all that is dear and desirable in life, this solitary stranger had traversed land and ocean to fix his abode where neither wealth was to be accumulated, pleasure pursued, nor honour won; and where, amidst toil, poverty, and contempt, he was about to spend his affections on creatures as insensible as the bushes, and to waste his intellect on minds as barren as the sands. — Yet none of these things moved him; and if the work which he meditated towards Caffraria was to be done at all, he was the man to do it.

In the progress of his journey he arrived at a lonely glen, with a lively stream running through it. The declivities on either side abounded with timber for building or fuel. Here then, where nothing lay within the range of the eye, save the works of God as they came from his hands, our Christian adventurer determined to erect his dwelling.

On this spot therefore, to which Providence had led him, he bowed with his face to the ground, and consecrated the place to that Being who had never before been named or acknowledged there. And He who seeth in secret made his divine presence to be so felt amidst appalling solitude, that when the worshipper rose from prostration, he could say with one of old, who had slept in the wilderness with a stone for his pillow, and saw in his dream a ladder that reached the sky, with angels ascending and descending thereon, — “This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.”

Forthwith the new settler fell to work, and with his own hands, or such casual help as he could obtain from the boors and the natives, he built himself a cottage, enclosed a garden, planted trees, and cultivated grain, flowers, and fruit, for provision, convenience, and delight. Slowly, but regularly, his circumstances improved; his flocks and cattle, though never numerous, were soon sufficient to supply his few necessities; and out of his

abundance he had even something to spare for the wretched Hottentots, who flocked to him from all quarters when their own improvidence or adverse seasons reduced them to temporary distress. In this retirement he lived nearly seven years, while under his reforming hand the waste round his habitation grew greener and lovelier every year. "The desert and the solitary place were glad for him; and the wilderness rejoiced and blossomed as the rose." Here too the good man walked with God; his home was a temple, and from the altar of his hearth the morning and evening incense of prayer and thanksgiving ascended with daily acceptance; while, amidst the silence of nature, the voice of song might be heard by the passing traveller, where heretofore, save the breeze and the rill, no sounds had been known but the howling of wild beasts, and the clamour of wilder men in pursuit of them, or in conflict with each other.

Meanwhile labour was sweet, and hardships were not unwelcome; for difficulties

and discouragements only excited to greater ardour and activity, — when from time to time he heard, though at long intervals, good news from the far land which he had left to sojourn here. Though in utter sequestration from kindred or society with whom he could pour out his joys and sorrows in affectionate intercourse, — his soul, by sympathy, enjoyed the communion of saints; in reading, at the distance of half the inhabited world, those appointed texts of Scripture which were the daily watch-words of his brethren at home, the themes of their private meditation, family exercises, and congregational discourses. More especially on the Sabbaths, christian-festivals, and memorial-days of their own church, he loved to call to mind how his old companions were engaged at every particular hour. Then, indeed, he was among them in spirit, when the Scriptures were read and expounded; — when they sang in security the hymns which their ancestors under persecution had composed amidst the mountains of Bohemia; and, when the

multitude of them that kept holy-day assembled to hear the exhortations of their elders, the diaries of heathen missionaries, like himself (his own sometimes among the rest), or the testamentary memoirs of departed members of the humble community; — then too, our hermit would sit down with them in solemn thought at the Lord's table, or exult with them on more jubilant occasions, when all classes united with music and song to make a joyful noise to the God of their salvation. Nor was it the least endeared of these sacred reminiscences to make one (though unseen) in a funeral procession to the burying-ground, which his own hands had helped to lay out, — when, walking two and two, the men apart, the women the same, the children at the head (the slow, deep harmony of horns and trombones mingling with sweet voices in a psalm on the blessedness of “going home,” and being for ever with the Lord,) the congregation followed the remains of a brother or a sister, borne on a bier to the grave, — till earth appeared so nigh to heaven, while dust

returned to dust, that the living felt, whatever were their consolations here, “to depart, and to be with Christ was far better.”—Oh! in such reveries, that seemed to take him out of the body, though cut off from all communication through eye or ear, by voice or hand, with those to whom he clave in heart, — solitude ceased to be solitude to him, while he proved that he was yet one with the disciples of Christ, as they were one in their adorable Head.

Yet had he society, human society; the lowest in truth that could be entitled to the name, or be endured without loathing. He repined not, for this was the very society which he had chosen out of all the tribes of mankind; the society for which he had forsaken all that he loved best, and lamented most in the world. Thinly scattered through interminable tracts of desolate country, with here and there an oasis of cultivation, were descried the kraals of the Hottentots, like circles of bee-hives in sunny and sheltered spots, on the margin of streams, — or occa-

sionally the lonely tents of the Bushmen, roving from place to place, wheresoever they could find game or plunder. But as colonization had spread, great numbers of the former, in the capacity of servants, earned a pittance, enough to keep them from starving, by lazy drudgery for the farmers, or by tending the cattle which ranged far and nigh in search of their own pasture. Peter Kolben, and others of the elder travellers in this excommunicated region, have minutely, if not faithfully, described the uncouth persons, detestable habits, and atrocious manners of the native population, at the time of which this history treats. Our unassuming visiter went not to Africa to spy out the nakedness of the land, nor to expose its rude inhabitants to the abhorrence of polished Europeans. His was another errand ; he condescended to their low estate, that he might help them to rise above it ; he regarded their wickedness and abominations only that he might show them the way to be delivered from both. As for religion, he scarcely found any thing among them that

could be called by that desecrated name, which is used to signify *every thing that it is not*, in the errors, extravagances, and illusions of Jews, Mahommedans, Pagans, and Christians. A certain winged insect was almost the only object of superstitious reverence among them. “Do not kill that fly, for it is the Hottentots’ god!” exclaimed a mother to her daughter, who, with infantine eagerness, was pursuing the little idol which her parent worshipped. At the return of the Pleiades the Hottentots held an annual festival. As soon as these made their appearance in the east, the mothers, who had been watching for the auspicious omen, flew to awaken their children, whom they caught up in their arms, ran with them into the open field, pointed out the beautiful stars, and taught them to hold forth their little hands in admiration. Then the inhabitants of the kraal assembled to dance and sing an ancient strain, of which this was the burthen: — “O Sista! thou father over our heads! give us showers that our fruits may ripen, and that we may

have plenty of food. Send us a good year, that we may not be forced to rob the white people, nor they be provoked to kill us!" Thus, the true Father of all the families of the earth left not even these, his stray offspring, "without witness of Himself, in that He gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness."

It was a remarkable characteristic of these destitute savages, that in general they were very honest; for, even when pinched with hunger, they were rarely tempted to steal. This refers exclusively to the genuine Hottentots, who appear to have been a people distinct from the numberless tribes that lived northward of the colony. Their own tradition of their origin was this.—In a remote age a *house of passage* (a ship or canoe) arrived near the present situation of Cape Town, containing a man, his wife, two boys, and a girl; a bull, a cow with three calves, two more bulls and a heifer; a ram and a ewe with three lambs, two other rams and a second

ewe without offspring: — these were the progenitors of the Hottentots and all their cattle. Whence the vessel came they knew not; but it has been conjectured, from the resemblance between sundry words in their language to some in the Hindoo dialects, but especially from the correspondence between the tricks of their sorcerers and those of the Nicobar islands, that their ancestors came from the east.

George, — for the reader must not forget the Christian name of our evangelist, the other being kept secret for the sake of those who do not wish to know it; if there be any that *do*, they may easily find out from what materials this history has been compiled, — George, at every interval of labour, sought out the objects of his compassion, and solicited their confidence. Their intercourse, indeed, at first was scarcely more intelligible than if he had assembled around him the lions, elephants, and giraffes of the neighbourhood, and endeavoured to make them sensible of his good-will towards them, by

such gestures, looks, and accents, as might be supposed conciliatory and agreeable to them; while they, in return, addressed him with equal familiarity in the growling tones and with the boisterous freedom of corporeal action, by which they converse with each other. But the language of love is simple, brief, and expressive; nor can it long be misunderstood between man and his fellow, though the dissimilarity of intellect and manners be as wide in appearance as between man and brute. Love talks, and looks, and moves with meaning of his own, which all can apprehend who are capable of loving or being beloved. A kind word, a kind deed, even a kind purpose, is soon felt and acknowledged. The barbarians, it is true, were so unaccustomed to these from Europeans, that, when they found a white man who spake gently to them, who caressed their children, and concerned himself with their poor affairs, they wondered, and scarcely knew how to believe the evidence of their own senses, or the testimony of their own bosoms in favour of his sincerity.

The thing was new in Caffraria, and slowly and warily they met his advances. It was to them as if the tyger had quitted the forest and come to domesticate among them ; as if the leopard had brought his prey to the kraal and laid it at their feet, presenting his lithe back to be fondled, while his spots darkened and his skin glistened as their infants patted his sides, or rolled with him on the grass. It was the children, in fact, that led the way to affability between George and the natives : he soon won their artless affections, and found the way to the hearts of their parents through the breasts of these little ones. Formerly every sport or occupation was suspended when the stranger drew near ; now the young shouted at the sight of him, and ran from their mothers' sides to meet and conduct him to their homes. Labour went on more diligently in his presence ; and recreation, if checked in its violence, was more innocently and delightfully pursued when he took a part in it.

From the hour of his arrival he had been

striving hard to obtain some practical knowledge of their language; the mechanism of which resembled nothing that he had ever heard, being clicked with the tongue and guggled from the throat in such a manner, that neither could his ear distinguish the rabble of sounds so as to separate them into syllables, nor his unpractised organs form any successful imitation of them. There was not a cry of bird, beast, or insect, which he could not more readily have learned and made subservient to the purpose of communicating with the species that employed it, than the unutterable gutturals of Hottentot speech. Yet such is the flexibility of voice and delicacy of ear among the natives themselves, that since, in a later age, they have received Christianity, their devotional singing in a dialect not their own * is so sweet and harmonious, that an exquisite judge and eminent composer of sacred music has called

* The Low Dutch, which, though the colony is now in possession of the English, is the general language of both Whites and Hottentots.

them “the smooth-throated nation.” Finding the mastery of their tongue unattainable, George conceived the bold idea of teaching them his own, or rather the Low Dutch, spoken by the colonists. Most of the barbarians with whom he had correspondence, already understood enough of this to qualify them for herdsmen and labourers to the boors. He determined to teach them as much more as should enable them, in the plainest words, to understand those truths of Revelation which all must become little children to learn. Old, middle-aged, and young, eagerly offered themselves for scholars; and, by indefatigable diligence in bestowing instruction on minds as little prepared for the reception of knowledge as their own rocks were for culture, he so far succeeded in the almost hopeless attempt, as to render many of them well able to hold common discourse with him, and some to read the Scriptures, whereby a few, it may be averred, were in due time made wise unto salvation.

It was, indeed, a simple tale that he told,

but he told it so often, and told it so earnestly, that they were sure he believed it himself; and when, with a voice faltering through tenderness, hands stretched forth in affectionate entreaty, and eyes sparkling amidst tears, yet looking as if he could see into their very souls, — he pressed his message home to their consciences, the most stupid among them could not but hearken. And hearken they did, with wonder, incredulity, and scorn, at first; but alarm, conviction, resentment, shame or compunction, alternately ran through the multitude as he proceeded; till, in the sequel, now one, then another, found hope, joy, and peace, in believing. In a word, his auditories in sheepskins received the Gospel with the same conflicting emotions and various issues, which usually accompany the plain declaration of its truths among men of the most enlightened minds. And this was the sum of our preacher's discourses, — “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not pe-

rish, but have everlasting life." He dwelt especially on the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which shall be revealed. Then, while he adjured them by the agony and bloody sweat, by the cross and passion, by the precious death and burial, by the glorious resurrection and ascension of the Redeemer, to be reconciled to God, — then, indeed, there were some who could say with the disciples at Emmaus, "Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" The general number of George's catechumens amounted to about fifty persons, besides casual hearers. Of these seven were baptized by him; and while he remained in Africa they walked worthily, according to their profession. Thus was there a Christian church founded in the wilderness, where hundreds of generations of human inhabitants, following each other like the succession of unconscious plants and dumb animals there, had lived and died in brute ignorance, and insensibility of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come. Thus,

too, was this portion of the earth, which before seemed twice cursed and abandoned for the primal offence, converted into a field which the Lord had blessed ; wherever the footsteps of a true disciple, treading in the invisible ones of his Master, imprinted the soil, — for the Master, of a truth, was with his servant here, — with him in his home, and with him in his heart ; with him in his labours, and with him to the end ; though, in a short time, all that he had done and suffered for Africa seemed to be frustrated for ever.

With prejudice, enmity, and inveterate opposition, did many of the Dutch boors behold these admirable changes in their neighbourhood, — the resurrection of intellect, amelioration of character, and comparative refinement of manners among the gross Hottentots, whom they had hitherto held in subjection more hardening to the moral nature, than the rude freedom from which they had tamed them. The miracles of Moses were not more strange in the eyes of the Israelites, than

were the marvellous effects of the Gospel among the Heathens to men who called themselves believers in it, but who, having come to Caffraria for purposes of commerce and agriculture, had not an idea with regard to the natives beyond the hope of preying upon their stupidity, and making their legs and arms implements of husbandry or machinery for locomotion. These very naturally, and yet very foolishly, became alarmed at the symptoms of reformation among their dependents, to which they could not remain blind; for ignorance is instinctively afraid of knowledge, and Christian instruction being the communication of the best knowledge, domineering ignorance in heathen lands is more opposed to it than to all the idolatries and abominations under the sun. The boors, not aware that this scriptural mode of civilising barbarians would necessarily make them gentle, peaceable, kindly-affectioned one to another, and meekly obedient to their superiors, were shrewd enough to perceive that their serfs would soon be as intelligent

as themselves; and thence they concluded that, being the majority, they would of course combine and drive their masters forth from the country.

The planters, therefore, conspired first to get rid of the teacher. This they attempted, by insinuating jealousies between him and the poor creatures whom he was daily laying down his life to serve, and by exciting prejudice on the part of the colonial government against its best subject. Before the latter they brought railing accusations and preposterous complaints, as though he were endangering the safety of the Company's dominions, by instilling into the population principles which would not only lead to rebellion, but would render them more formidable enemies than they could be in their present state, by making them as wise to do evil as the Europeans themselves; — of being made wise to do any thing else, they seem to have had no conception. George, on these occasions, repeatedly went to Cape Town to answer the charges laid against him, which he always did

to the satisfaction of the governor, and the silencing of his adversaries, for a time at least. But they were not to be thus baffled; they persevered in their hostility to his plans of peace, and so vexed and harassed his righteous soul by their persecuting machinations, that he found himself under the necessity of returning to Europe to sue for redress at the head of authority, the colonial legislature being impotent to protect him in the exercise of his undoubted rights and privileges as a settler under the East India Company's own sanction. He took back with him this testimony from the governor, that "though he was only a plain farmer, he had done more good to the miserable Hottentots, than any man in the colony beside him had ever done."

But though the justice which he claimed in Holland was readily promised, it was so long delayed, that delay became denial; and a timid and bigotted policy so far prevailed, that in the event he was refused permission even to return to his station. This was the

hardest trial of all; for he would gladly have resumed his ministry at any peril, rather than thus be detained an exile from it at home. There was no choice, however, and he was compelled to retire amidst his own people in Germany. With them he lived for several years in hopes of more propitious times. These never came; and like the worthies of old, he died in faith, not having received the promise. As in Africa, among Hottentots, he had lived in fellowship of spirit with his brethren in Europe, so among these he maintained communion of thought and affection with his few converts and the many pagans in Caffraria, from whom he had been separated by an inscrutable Providence. There came too from time to time brief tidings from the valley in which the little church of the desert dwelt, stating that its members yet held together, and were earnestly enquiring when their kind teacher would return. At length he heard no more, but he never forgot them, nor passed a day without special supplication in their behalf before a throne of

grace; for, when every other prospect had closed upon him, he could yet bear them on his heart in fervent and believing prayer. On one of these occasions, it is said, that not appearing in his usual place, to officiate in the congregation, and being sought in his closet, he was found dead there on his knees, holding, it may be presumed, his beloved Africa in remembrance with his last breath, and ascending from intercession for her on earth to intercession for her in heaven.

AN AFRICAN VALLEY.

PART II.

“ Left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers.” *Isaiah i. 8.*

MEANWHILE the little flock which George had gathered in the wilderness, were gradually dispersed or destroyed by the wolves in human shape among their own tribe, or the more ferocious ones of European origin. The counsels of God are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. The fact can only be recorded, that in a short time there was no longer a community of Christian Hottentots in existence; but He, without whose permission not a sparrow can fall to the ground, assuredly accomplished, in the few

who had embraced the truth, all the good pleasure of his will. Though their names were written in heaven, there remains no memorial on earth of their lives and latter end, except in two instances hereafter to be mentioned. The confession, however, of his first convert, may be given here as an example of the effect produced by his teaching. If there be found among Christians those who despise its simplicity, of them it may be said, that *they* “know not the Scriptures nor the power of God.” Being asked what he thought of Christ, he thus replied, “If all my countrymen were to forsake our Saviour, yet I would not go away, for with *him* is life. I know that I am not what I ought to be; but I will nevertheless abide with Jesus, till I experience the full power of his precious blood to change my heart.”

After the decease of George, the time of the visitation of South Africa seemed to have arrived and to have gone by, no more to return. If ever a work of faith and labour of love had been wrought in vain, his might be

imagined to have so miscarried; or, if the hope which the righteous hath in death could perish like the hope of the hypocrite, so appeared his to have died with him. During fifty years from his return to Europe, all probability of reviving the object of his mission was removed from himself, and from his successors, who after his demise never ceased to look forward to the time when some of their number might re-occupy his post. His cottage meanwhile fell into ruins, his garden ran to waste; the wild boar of the forest broke down the fence, and serpents hissed among its degenerating flowers. Year after year, the leaves, the blossoms, and the fruit returned to his orchard trees; but the leaves fell in solitude and rotted on the ground, the blossoms unadmired withered in the wind, while the fruits ripened only to become the food of monkies and baboons, which multiplied so abundantly in the neighbourhood, that the glen itself obtained the name of *Bavians Kloof*. The place became a desolation like ancient Babylon. The wild beast

of the desert lay in ambush there; the houses, forsaken by their inhabitants, were full of doleful creatures, and bats brooded under the darkness of their walls; thither the vulture flew with his mate to prey on the carcass which the lion had left; and there the satyr danced and cried to his fellow. Where the loveliest spot of cultivation in South Africa had flourished, the footstep of man was seldom seen, except when he chaced the antelope through the thickets, or, when the broad channels were dry, sought water for his cattle at the streamlet welling forth between the mountains, at which George had often filled his cup, and in whose flood, like the forerunner of Christ, he had administered baptism in the wilderness. Now, where prayer was wont to be made, as of old, by the river-side, and where "glory to God in the highest" had been sung in strains with which angels might have mingled their harps and voices — the active day and peaceful night had changed their characters: the day was desolately

still; the night terrible with the roaring of tygers, and the cries of their victims.

Yet was there an eye of mercy never turned away, and a hand of Providence never withdrawn from this forsaken and polluted, but consecrated glen. The decree had gone forth from eternity, that Africa should *here* see the salvation of God; nor through the thousands of years, during which it had lain like “the earth without form and void,” and “darkness was upon the face” of it, had one moment been lost, though, according to human conception, it was late before “the Spirit of God moved upon the waters, and God said, Let there be light, and there was light.” He who “doeth what he will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth,” works in his own time, and his own way, by his own means, and his own agents only. His time arrived, his way was made known, his agents were appointed, and his means put into their power. Not a tear had been shed in vain by the first planter of this vineyard, thus relapsed to the wild; not a prayer, which he had of-

ferred on the spot, or at the distance of two thousand leagues, had been forgotten, or in the event will remain unanswered, when the purposes of heaven shall all be accomplished, though to reveal them entirely may ask ages to come. In the fiftieth year after George's return to Europe, three men of the same communion, and of like spirit with himself, were deputed to South Africa, to labour in the field which had lain fallow so long that its very locality was scarcely known. They sailed in 1792, with full authority from the Dutch East India Company to take possession of the old settlement, and revive his work among the Heathen, roving or resident in any part of the colony. On landing they proceeded as early as possible to the scene of their engagement, which they found as hath already been described, "an abomination of desolations."

The ruins of George's dwelling were discovered, and also some shells of Hottentot kraals made of sun-dried bricks, which his converts had once occupied, but which were

now the lairs of jackals and hyenas. The dilapidated walls of the former, rising above the briers and reed-grass that choaked up the enclosure, presented a land-mark at the opening of the valley; and though its history had fallen into equal decay with its structures, there were relics of tradition concerning the place, which made it more awful in the sight both of boors and barbarians than the Donnersberg on the one hand, or the Great Mountain on the other. Amidst the rank vegetation of the garden and orchard, there yet flourished, in prime of vigour and fertility, a single pear-tree, which George had planted. This, in the long interval since his departure, had thrown itself forth into immensity of boughs and foliage, bearing in its season delicious burthens of fruit to feast the fowls of heaven, the reptiles of the brake, and the obscene animals from which the glen took its name. The new comers immediately set themselves to dispossess the latter tenants, whose progenitors, since the departure of the good husbandman, had seized the inheritance, and

transmitted it from generation to generation, more and more fitted by its unpruned and exuberant wildness, to be the haunt of creatures that equally caricature humanity in their shapes and their manners. Slowly, reluctantly, and not without show of opposition, the monkeys and baboons (as well as more formidable beasts of prey) resigned their usurped domain, retiring into the woody recesses of the glen, whence they frequently sallied forth to commit depredations on the rich products of the ground, now rapidly improved by cultivation. As soon as the soil was sufficiently cleared, the industrious successors of the first apostle of South Africa began their ministry, both of teaching and preaching, under the wide-spreading branches of the aforementioned pear-tree, converting at once into a school-house and a temple that living memorial, and beautiful emblem of the church, which George had planted there; but which, unlike it, had been demolished to the root. This emblem and memorial, however, had not ceased to be a pledge of that

church's resurrection; though lost for half a century, and left a prey to all manner of spoilers, it had still been preserved in the midst of devastation, like a tree of life, guarded by cherubim and the flaming sword turning every way, to afford food and shelter, a place for labour, and a sanctuary for worship, to disciples worthy of him whom they followed, and of the Master whom he and they equally served. It was a spectacle to create joy in heaven, thus to witness the scenes of George's days renewed on the very spot where he had lived; for here on the Sabbath, under the shadow of his pear-tree*, were assembled groups of such savages as he had been accustomed to address, wrapt in their sheepskins, and hideously ornamented with coloured earth, — yet hearkening to the words of eternal life, till the tears rolled down their tawny cheeks, and they forgot their fierce-

* This tree is yet standing, and though upwards of four-score years old, produced, in the season of 1821, fifteen sacks of excellent fruit; the greatest quantity ever gathered from it.

ness in wonder and delight of attention. And here, on other days, as many of the little Hottentots as the good brethren could collect, (though as frolicsome as leopards' cubs, and as difficult to keep when they were caught,) learned those first lessons of knowledge which Bacon and Newton conned, and the first principles of that wisdom, the lowest effect of which is to raise man to his own rank above the brute, and the highest to prepare him for the society of angels, and communion with his Maker.

On the first arrival of these good men at the kloof, they made earnest enquiries there, and wherever they had occasion to travel in the colony, respecting the dispersion of their predecessor's converts; but among a barbarous people, who had no records, and the Dutch boors, whose fathers had been his enemies, (and who themselves inherited their fathers' jealousies and fears towards the new-comers,) little information could be gleaned. One aged woman, however, whom George had baptized by the name of Helen, was traced

out. When they entered her miserable habitation, they found her nearly blind and helpless, her faculties having fallen into decay as deplorable as her person and circumstances. With difficulty they made her comprehend who they were, and what was their errand to Africa. By degrees her understanding seemed to grow enlightened, her heart revived within her, and the recollections of former years of youth, and hope, and happiness, came over her soul like the breath of resurrection into all that she once had known, but long had lost, and scarcely retained the power spontaneously to call again from the forgetfulness of old age. Her countenance kindled, her eye gleamed out of darkness, and tremblingly raising herself on the pallet, she directed a young Hottentot female who was with her, to bring forth from a corner of the hut something which the good white man who dwelt among them when she was in her prime had given her at his departure, with a special charge to keep it, and use it, till she should see him again. The treasure was carefully

enveloped in two sheep-skins, and proved to be a Dutch New Testament. Nor had this one talent been buried, like that which the slothful servant wrapt in a napkin, and hid in the earth till his Lord's return; — it had been well occupied according to the small ability of the possessor. Poor Helen had been long unable to peruse its pages herself, but the young woman, her neighbour, and only companion, when she visited this widow in her affliction, was in the practice of reading to her the words of that book. The venerable Christian, who had thus dwelt alone for fifty years among Heathen, yet never relinquished her faith in the Gospel, was overpowered with the good tidings which she had lived to hear that day, and joyfully renewed her open fellowship with the people from whom she had never been disunited in spirit. She survived about six years, and then came to her grave in a good old age, like a shock of corn fully ripe brought in at the season. Her humane assistant too, by the frequent perusal of Helen's Testament, was in heart

already prepared to receive the Gospel ; and she was one of the first-fruits of the ministry of George's successors, who here came in but to reap what he had sown.

Some time afterwards another ancient woman, whom George had baptized, and who now resided in a distant part of the colony, hearing that white men had come from Europe to instruct her country-people in the "Great Word," rose up in the midst of her family, and cried aloud, "My children, we must leave this place, and go to live with our teachers." She led the way ; her little clan followed, and she brought them to the glen where she had spent her happiest days in early life, and where she now resolved to spend her last, and (as they proved) the happiest of all. Her progeny were soon added to the small society of believers already separated from the Pagan multitude. This matron died not long since, when her age exceeded a century, according to the best computation. Though to the end she was a Hottentot in the government of her family,

—over which she exercised patriarchal authority, chastizing with a paralytic hand that could scarcely hurt a bird, her grey-headed offspring when they happened to displease her, and who, to their credit, bore correction most reverently from their mother, — yet, in all other respects, she exhibited an entire change of mind and manners, being an example of humility, kindness, and devotion, to all around her.

One more indirect, yet pretty evident recollection of George's residence in South Africa, and a tradition of his intended return, may be stated. A woman, who had joined the new congregation, told one of the ministers, that when she was a girl, her father had once called his family around him, and thus prophetically addressed them: "My children, what your father says is the truth. You are called Hottentots, and you are despised by other people, who are wiser and richer than you. But continue to behave well; for I am assured, that God (though we now know very little of him) will send teach-

ers of his will from a far country to our nation. I am old, and shall not live to see that day; but you are young, and will see with your eyes what I have told you. Now, my children, as soon as you hear that such persons are come, make haste to meet them; stay where they stay, follow them whithersoever they go, obey their words, and believe your father—it shall be well with you.”

George’s successors, for several years, had to encounter the same kind of hostility, privation, and suffering, to which he had been exposed; but, “as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend:”—three, in difficult circumstances, are more than proportionately better than one; for, by the union of hands, hearts, and heads, each has at command the resources of three, so that three in concert have the power of nine acting individually. Hence, by unwearied diligence, and quiet perseverance in well-doing, they finally put to silence evil-speaking, and reconciled even the enemies of religion to its diffusion among their dependents, when they

found the latter not only wiser, but better, for it: less to be feared, more worthy to be trusted; and more industrious, as well as more docile and expert in all kinds of service. In the course of a few years, a congregation of Christian converts was collected about the glen. A plain and spacious church was erected in the midst of a regular village of comfortable houses, built after the European manner; multiplying from year to year, and tenanted by reclaimed Hottentots, Bushmen, and Caffres, as happily transformed from their native grossness, filth, and abominations, as the glen itself had been changed from an habitation of dragons to the abode of peace. Thus, in the midst of the waste howling wilderness was planted a garden of the Lord. The population, in the year 1821, amounted to nearly fifteen hundred persons, all bearing the Christian name, and exhibiting in a greater or lesser degree the glory and the grace of the Christian character, by their meek and docile behaviour. Meanwhile their minds, their persons, their manners, and their dwellings,

were equally improved, and advancing in improvement day by day, under the humanizing influence of the Gospel, which proved itself here, as it does every where, to be truth, light, knowledge, and blessedness, to all who received it. Agriculture and mechanical arts, as well as useful learning, being introduced with religion, and growing up with it under the superintendence of faithful teachers, — whose numbers were reinforced, from time to time, by new arrivals from Europe, — secured to all the inhabitants those necessities and comforts of life which were consistent with their humble rank in society, while that rank was gradually rising above the mire of its origin; as the people were prepared by increased information for increased wants, and by these for increased enjoyments.

In course of time, when this happy experiment of a few sincere men, — meaning to do good, and meaning nothing else, in their disinterested services, — had become so signally successful as to attract the admiration of all who visited the place, Christians of other

communities began to follow the example in various districts of the colony; and they also, wherever they established themselves, practically refuted the inveterate lie, which had been told for ages by those who knew not what they said,—that *Hottentots could not be tamed*. Christianity and civilization, hand in hand,—the former leading the latter, as surely as the sun the day,—were promptly and invariably introduced wherever the voice was heard crying among them that sat in darkness and the shadow of death, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”

But this narrative being intended to exhibit only one beautiful chain of Providence, drawn out of the depths of eternity, in the days of the first apostle of South Africa,—lost in obscurity for fifty years after his return to Europe,—then brought to light again unbroken, and lengthened to this hour, when the whole mystery of its purpose is developed, though link shall be added to link till the end of time, with which alone its progression can

cease,—we shall not stay to enquire, how many other chains of the same beneficent Providence, extending in different directions, might be traced to the same origin in the painful, interrupted, and apparently for ever disappointed efforts of one poor man, persecuted and baffled in his own day, forgotten in that which succeeded, but whose memorial, revived in the third generation, ought never to be lost while the sun and moon endure. The present view of the immediate issue of his labours, may be properly closed with the description of a solemnity of annual recurrence in the African valley.

The village, decorated with many luxuriant trees, through which the roofs of the dwellings are distinguished in distance, emerging as from a wood, stands between two lofty eminences, the Kloof or glen behind it narrowing up between their slopes. A copious stream traverses the plain, which, when occasionally swoln with molten snows, or flooded with rains, rises into a formidable river. A striking proof of the exaltation of a degene-

ate race by the introduction of Christianity and its concomitant blessings, may be discovered in the structure, by Hottentot hands, of a solid and commodious bridge over this torrent. Among the gardens, orchards, and fields with which their cottages are surrounded, the loveliest enclosure is one of unploughed but not uncultivated ground, in which all the inhabitants have a common interest;—there the dead, all resting on their beds, lie side by side in uninterrupted order; for no grave being ever re-opened, nor any invidious distinction made, the place of each, when brought to this equal home, is that which occurs next to the last interred. Fenced with rose-trees, carpeted with flowers, silent, and lone, and beautiful, this frontier-bourne between two worlds,—the scene of many a parting and reunion while the months roll on,—once in the year assembles in full communion the deceased and the surviving, on that day when the church militant commemorates her fellowship with the church triumphant. The

brief particulars of one of these occasions, will best illustrate their general character.

On Easter Sunday morning (1819) the Hottentot congregation, with many strangers both native and European, had assembled in this burial-ground, by the early hour at which Mary, on the first day of the week, went to the sepulchre. About two thousand persons, old and young, were present, at the reading of the litany of their ancient church specially appointed for that festival, in the open air. All was hushed to silence under the cool grey morning sky, from which the stars were retiring one by one, and the moon grew paler in the west; the dew lay thick upon the ground, where the graves were ranged in goodly rows, one small flat stone on the head of each, bearing the name and date of “the poor inhabitant below;” while the space yet unoccupied, presented to the eyes of many there standing, the very spot where each should lie down among the clods of the valley, —the very spot from which each should come forth at the shout of the archangel and

the trump of God. Here — amidst the congregation of the living, and in the presence of that of the dead, — the single voice of the minister was heard, relieved only from pause to pause by the responses of the people, at first low and indistinct, but gradually rising in tone and fervour, as the dawn brightened above them. On either side were seen the everlasting hills already mentioned; *here* the *Donnersberg*, the mountain of thunder, so called because the heaviest storms collect on its head, rush down, and spend their fury at its feet; — *there* the *Gross Mountain*, shutting out half the heavens with its shadow. Ere long the peaks of both grew golden in the spreading light; the mists exhaled in shining wreaths along their eastern flanks, while the retiring darkness, more intense by contrast, deepened through the inner glen. In the midst of the service, while the words of the Redeemer were yet sounding in the ears of the people, as though they had heard them from his own lips, just breaking through the silence of the tomb, “ I am the resurrection

and the life ; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ;” the sun sprang above the horizon, opening the whole temple of the universe, and pouring at once his radiance upon the breadth of the mountains, into the bosom of the valley, upon the countenances of the living, along the graves of the dead. At sight of that daily emblem of the Sun of Righteousness arising on the nations with healing in his beams, the glad multitude lifted up their voices, praising God, and singing the triumph of Him, who, on the morn of his own resurrection, “ ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.”

This hath Christianity done for an African valley ; and this will it do for the rest of the dark places of the earth, which are yet full of the habitations of cruelty and wickedness. If there be philosophers or philanthropists who look with scorn upon this simple method of humanizing savages, let them do the like “ with their enchantments,” if they can ;—

till then they must bear the discredit of being unable, or the guilt of being unwilling, thus to benefit their fellow-men. Meanwhile, it becomes those, who are themselves not even attempting any thing, at least to be silent, while humble believers will behold, in that success which accompanies the efforts of the feeblest agents in this good work, "*the great power of God.*"

THE LAST DAY

To every thing beneath the sun there comes a last day, — and of all futurity this is the only portion of time that can in all cases be infallibly predicted. Let the sanguine then take warning, and the disheartened take courage; for to every joy and every sorrow, to every hope and every fear, there will come a last day; and man ought so to live by foresight, that while he learns in every state to be content, he shall in each be prepared for another, whatever that other may be. When we set an acorn we expect that it will produce an oak; when we plant a vine we calculate upon gathering grapes: but when we lay a plan for years to come, we may wish, and we can do no more except *pray*, that it may be accomplished, for we know not what even the morrow may bring forth; all that we *do* know beforehand of any thing is, —

that to every thing beneath the sun there comes a last day.

From Adam to Noah sixteen centuries elapsed, during which men multiplied on the earth, and increased in wickedness as in number, till to the forbearance of mercy itself there came a last day, and wrath in one flood of destruction swept away a whole world of transgressors. — The pollutions of Sodom and Gomorrah long insulted the Majesty of Heaven; but a last day came, and the Lord raised fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, that overthrew them for ever, erasing the very ground on which they stood from the solid surface of the globe. The children of Israel groaned for ages under the yoke of the Egyptians; a last day came, the bands of iron were burst asunder, and the Red Sea, the eastern wall of their prison-house, opened its flood-gates to let the redeemed of the Lord pass through, but closed them in death on their pursuers, like the temple of Dagon pulled down upon the heads of the Philistines. — For almost two thousand years the

law and the covenant of works, delivered from Mount Sinai, were honoured and violated by the same rebellious and stiff-necked people, who deemed themselves the elect of God to the exclusion in perpetuity of all kindreds beside ; but a last day came, the sceptre departed from Judah, the Holy City was made an abomination of desolations, and the covenant of grace, universal and everlasting, was proclaimed to all mankind.

In profane history we read similar lessons of mutability, similar evidences of the uncertainty of every day except *the last day*. The walls of Babylon were built to outstand the mountains, which they rivalled in grandeur and solidity ; a last day came, and Babylon is fallen. If you ask — “ Where is she ? — “ Where *was* she ? ” will be the reply ; for she has so fallen, that there remains of her unexampled magnificence no more vestige on the soil by which she can be traced, than of a foundered ship on the face of the ocean, when the storm is gone by, and the dolphins are bounding among the billows, and throw-

ing out their colours to the sun. — Greece, among the nations like the Pleiades among the stars, a small and beautiful sisterhood of states, flourished in arts and arms without a rival in her own age, and without a parallel in succeeding times ; but her last day came, and Greece is gone to decay, unutterable decay ; yet she lives in her ruins amidst the moral desolation of Turkey, and she lives in her glory on the pages of her poets, historians, and orators ; yea, and she shall live again in her sons, for the last day of their enslavement is at hand. Rome was seven hundred and fifty years growing from infancy to maturity ; she stood through half that period more in splendid infamy ; her last day came, and then she sunk under such a weight of years and trophies, that her relics have buried in their dust the seven hills, on which in her prosperity she had glorified herself and lived deliciously, saying in her heart, “ I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” Rome was mortal ; there can be no revival from *her* degradation : the last of the Romans

perished a thousand years ago, among the millions of barbarians with whom the Roman people were at length indistinguishably and inseparably amalgamated. Rome and Babylon have been equally identified in perdition as in name by the “sure word of prophecy;” and the metropolis of modern Italy is no more the one, than Bagdad is the other: a different race possesses each, and their glory or shame in ages to come can never again affect the character of the generations gone by, whose last day stands irreversible in the calendar of time. It is not so with Greece, *her* posterity was never cut off.—Our own country has experienced as many vicissitudes of government as have here been recounted from the annals of the world; to each of these there came a last day: her own last day is not yet come; nor, while she continues pre-eminent in virtue, intelligence, and enterprize, need we fear its arrival.

Taking the middle age of life as the standard of the present generation, those who are arrived at that period have themselves

been living witnesses of more new eras and last days, in which the destiny of nations was implicated, unravelled, and re-woven more strangely and disastrously, than were wont to occur in whole centuries of ordinary time. The French Revolution brought on the last day of the antiquated despotism of the Bourbons; many last days cut off, as suddenly as by strokes of the guillotine, the ephemeral constitutions that followed; till Bonaparte, like Milton's Death, bridging his way from hell to earth, with his "mace petrific" struck, and fixed the jarring, jumbled elements of the political chaos, and seemed for a while to have established an immovable throne on the razed foundations of every other in Europe; but a last day to his empire came, and wafted him, as passive as a cloud, over the ocean to St. Helena. A last day to his life came also, and he disappeared from the earth. — The universal war in Christendom, which raged from the fall of the Bastile to the fall of Napoleon, found its last day on the plains of Waterloo. Peace followed, but for years it

has been like peace on the battle-field, when the conflict is ended: the dead alone are at rest; the living are maimed, lacerated, writhing with agony. But let them not faint; they shall yet arise; they *are* rising — and have half-risen since these speculations were first penned. — A last day to the present miseries of our country will come; the wounds of war will soon be healed entirely.

In the life of every adult there occur many last days. Man is ushered into the world from a source so hidden, that his very parents know him not till he appears, and he knows not himself even then. He passes rapidly through the stages of childhood, youth, maturity, old age; and to each of these there comes a last day. The transitions, indeed, are so gradual as to be imperceptible; no more to be remembered than the moment at which we fell asleep last night, and as little dependent on our will as was the act of awaking this morning. Yet so distinct are these several states of progressive existence, that though all bound together by unbroken

consciousness, the changes are in reality as entire as the separate links of one chain. In the issue comes a last day to the whole; and man is withdrawn into an abyss of eternity, as unsearchable by finite thought as that from which he emanated at first.

It has been already observed, that in the life of every adult individual there are many last days. There is a last day of the nursery, of the school, of juvenile obedience, of parental authority; there is a last day at our first home, and a last day at every other place that becomes our home in the sequel; there are last days of companionship and of rivalry, of business and of vanity; of promise and exertion, of failure and success; last days of love and of friendship, enjoyment and endearment; every day in its turn is the last to all that went before it. Every year has its last day. Amidst the festivities of Christmas arrives the close of the months; to remind us of the end of all earthly fruition. The most reprobate of men desire to die in peace; on the last night in December, therefore, we

should lie down with the same dispositions as if we were making our bed in the grave; on the first morning of January we should rise up with the same hopes as if the trumpet had summoned us to the resurrection of the just: *that* moment should be to us as the end of time, and *this* as the beginning of eternity.

To every thing beneath the sun there comes a last day: from this point our meditations began; at this point they must conclude, leaving those who may have accompanied the writer thus far, to pursue at their leisure the moral inferences associated with the whole. The facts themselves, few, simple, and common-place as they are, cannot have been made to pass, even in this imperfect exhibition, through intelligent minds, without impressing upon them feelings of awe, apprehension, and humility, prompting to immediate and unsparing self-examination. From this there can be nothing to fear; from the neglect of it every thing: for however alarming the discoveries of evil unsuspected, or peril unknown may be, such discoveries had better

be made now, while escape is before us, than in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and escape will be impossible, — *that* day, which of all others is most emphatically called “*The Last Day.*”

POSTSCRIPT.

A POET should part with his readers in his own character. If the public will not allow the dignity of verse to the following stanzas, the author of these volumes must expect to bear the ignominy of having assumed a misnomer in his title-page.

A LUCID INTERVAL.

Oh ! light is pleasant to the eye,
 And health comes rustling on the gale,
 Clouds are careering through the sky,
 Whose shadows mock them down the dale ;
 Nature as fresh and fragrant seems
 As I have met her in my dreams.

For I have been a prisoner long
 In gloom and loneliness of mind,
 Deaf to the melody of song,
 To every form of beauty blind ;
 Nor morning dew, nor evening balm,
 Might cool my cheek, my bosom calm.

But now the blood, the blood returns,
With rapturous pulses thro' my veins ;
My heart, new-born within me, burns,
My limbs break loose, they cast their chains,
Rekindled at the sun, my sight
Tracks to a point the eagle's flight.

I long to climb those old grey rocks,
Glide with yon river to the deep ;
Range the green hills with herds and flocks,
Free as the roe-buck, run and leap ;
Then mount the lark's victorious wing,
And from the depth of ether sing.

O Earth ! in maiden innocence,
Too early fled thy golden time ;
O Earth ! Earth ! Earth ! for man's offence,
Doom'd to dishonour in thy prime ;
Of how much glory then bereft !
Yet what a world of bliss was left !

The thorn, harsh emblem of the curse,
Puts forth a paradise of flowers ;
Labour, man's punishment, is nurse
To halcyon joys at sunset hours :
Plague, famine, earthquake, want, disease,
Give birth to holiest charities.

And Death himself, with all the woes
That hasten, yet prolong, his stroke,—
Death brings with every pang repose,
With every sigh he solves a yoke;
Yea, his cold sweats and moaning strife
Wring out the bitterness of life.

Life, life, with all its burthens dear!
Friendship is sweet, Love sweeter still;
Who would forego a smile, a tear,
One generous hope, one chastening ill?
Home, kindred, country!—these are ties
Might keep an angel from the skies.

But these have angels never known,
Unvex'd felicity their lot;
Their sea of glass before the throne,
Storm, lightning, shipwreck, visit not:
Our tides, beneath the changing moon,
Are soon appeased,—are troubled soon.

Well, I will bear what all have borne,
Live my few years, and fill my place;
O'er old and young affections mourn,
Rent one by one from my embrace,
Till suffering ends, and I have done
With all delights beneath the sun.

Whence came I?—Memory cannot say ;
What am I?—Knowledge will not show ;
Bound whither?—Ah! away, away,
Far as eternity can go :—
Thy love to win, thy wrath to flee,
O God! Thyself mine helper be.

October, 1823.

THE END.

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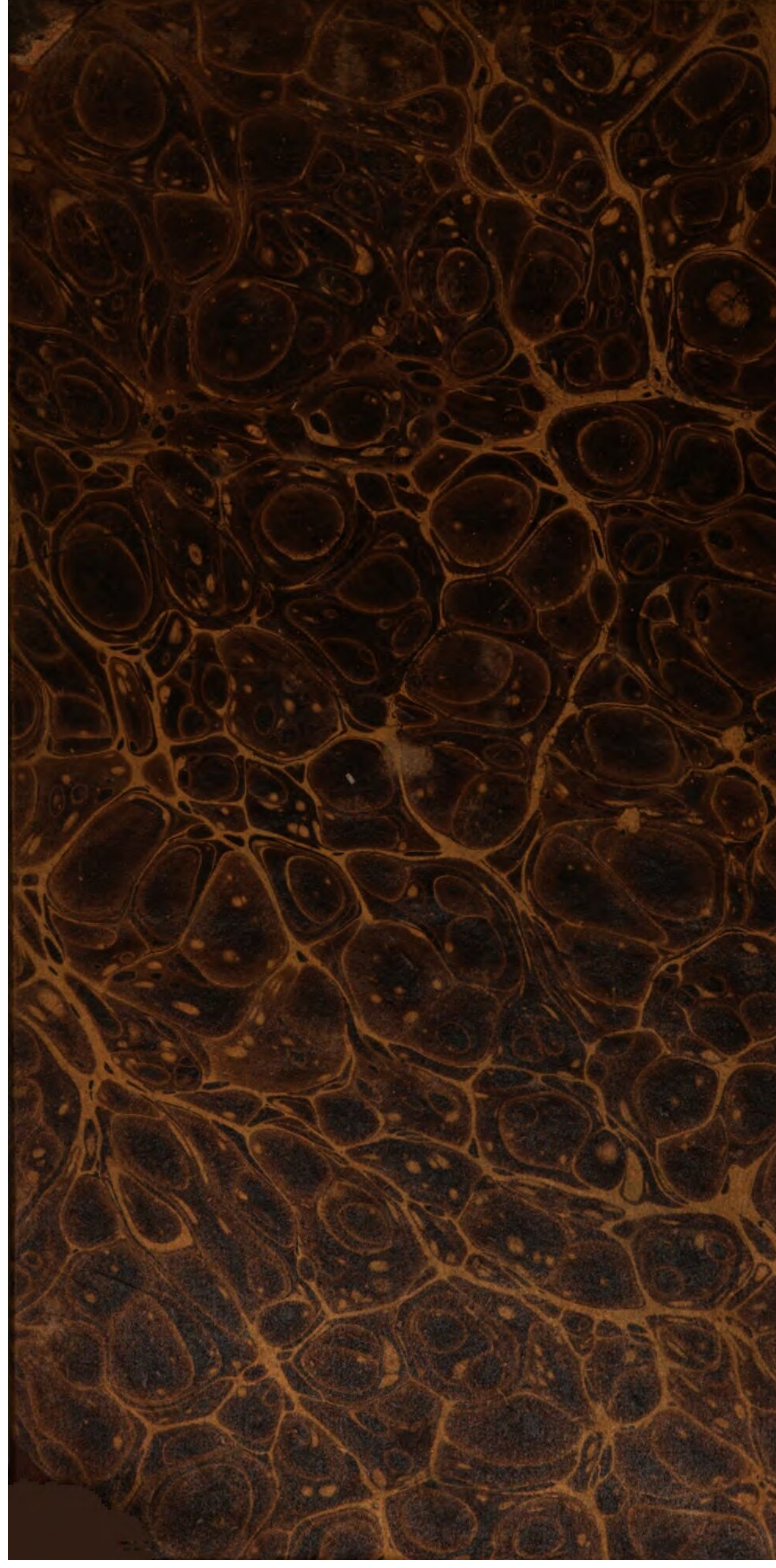
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